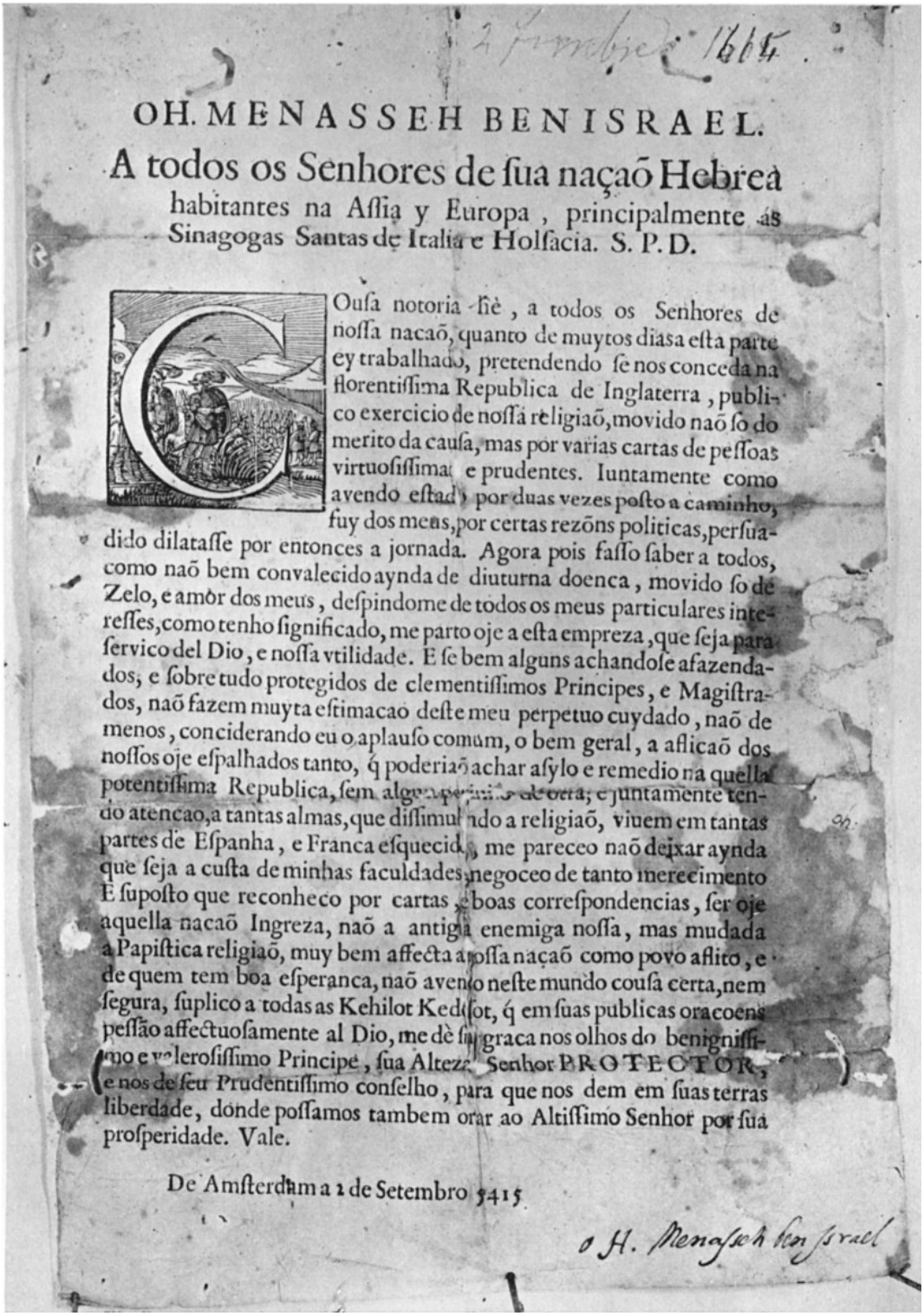
Dr. Peter Aldag

Jewry in England: A Thousand-Year History

Volume 2: The Return of the Jews Under Cromwell (1290-1658)



OH. MENASSEH BENISRAEL.

A todos os Senhores de ſua naçaõ Hebreà habitantes na Aſſia y Europa, principalmente ás Sinagogas Santas de Italia e Holſacia. S. P. D.

Ouſa notoria ſiè, a todos os Senhores de noſſa nacaõ, quanto de muytos diasa eſta parte ey trabalhado, pretendendo ſe nos conceda na florentiſſima Republica de Inglaterra, publico exercicio de noſſa religiaõ, movido naõ ſo do merito da cauſa, mas por varias cartas de peſſoas virtuoſiſſimas e prudentes. Iuntamente como avendo eſtado por duas vezes poſto a caminho, fuy dos meus, por certas rezõns politicas, perſuadido dilataſſe por entonces a jornada. Agora pois faſſo ſaber a todos, como naõ bem convalecido aynda de diuturna doenca, movido ſo de Zelo, e amor dos meus, deſpindome de todos os meus particulares intereſſes, como tenho ſignificado, me parto oje a eſta empreza, que ſeja para ſervico del Dio, e noſſa vtilidade. E ſe bem alguns achandoſe afazendados, e ſobre tudo protegidos de clementiſſimos Principes, e Magiſtrados, naõ fazem muyta eſtimacaõ deſte meu perpetuo cuydado, naõ de menos, conciderando eu o aplauſo comum, o bem geral, a aflicaõ dos noſſos oje eſpalhados tanto, q̃ poderiaõ achar aſylo e remedio na quella potentiſſima Republica, ſem algu[illegible] de outra; e juntamente tendo atencao, a tantas almas, que diſſimulando a religiaõ, viuem em tantas partes de Eſpanha, e Franca eſquecidos, me pareceo naõ deixar aynda que ſeja a cuſta de minhas faculdades, negoceo de tanto merecimento E ſupoſto que reconheco por cartas, e boas correſpondencias, ſer oje aquella nacaõ Ingreza, naõ a antiga enemiga noſſa, mas mudada a Papiſtica religiaõ, muy bem affecta a noſſa naçaõ como povo aflito, e de quem tem boa eſperanca, naõ avendo neſte mundo couſa certa, nem ſegura, ſuplico a todas as Kehilot Kedoſot, q̃ em ſuas publicas oracoens peſſão affectuoſamente al Dio, me dè ſua graca nos olhos do benigniſſimo e valeroſiſſimo Principe, ſua Alteza Senhor PROTECTOR, e nos de ſeu Prudentiſſimo conſelho, para que nos dem em ſuas terras liberdade, donde poſſamos tambem orar ao Altiſſimo Senhor por ſua proſperidade. Vale.

De Amſterdam a 1 de Setembro 5415

o H. Menaſseh ben Iſrael

Jewry in England: A Thousand-Year History

The volumes of this study:

Volume 1: From the Earliest Years To Expulsion (669-1290)

Volume 2: The Return of the Jews Under Cromwell (1290-1658)

Volume 3: Royal Protectors of the Jews (1658-1714)

Volume 4: Early Emancipation Struggles and Jewish Defeat (1714-1753)

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England Without Jews

It has long been held that, after the expulsion of 1290, there were hardly any Jews in England for the next 300 years or so. Jewish historians have worked hard to prove the opposite.[1] To summarise their findings, they actually found one or two Jews in England during this time, but larger numbers – such as Jewish communities – were completely missing.[2] So this period is of little interest to us and will therefore only be touched upon briefly.

It is often claimed that at that time the officials of the English Crown were not sufficiently trained to guarantee a complete cleansing of Jews from the country.[3] This may be true, but it is likely that the Jews hardly dared to remain in England for fear of the threatened death penalty. Undoubtedly, any lack of orderly administration was made up for by the concern of the populace, who, because of the existing antipathy, made sure that the Jews – in the event that they did not emigrate – were reported.

It may be that the odd Jew was baptised and still secretly followed his former religion, but this would have been of only minor importance, just as any mixing of these Jews with the English people was of no importance because the overall purity of the race at that time was not affected.

In addition to these baptised Jews, perhaps one or two unbaptised Jews were in England during this period.

Under Queen Elizabeth we find two baptised Jews, John Immanuel Tremellius (1510-1580) and Philip Ferdinand (1555-1598), who were in her special favour. Both were Hebraists, with Tremellius becoming regius professor of Hebrew at Cambridge in 1549 and Ferdinand teaching Hebrew at both Oxford and Cambridge.[4]

Another Jew named Joachim Gaunse, a metallurgist and mining expert who converted to Christianity, rose to a certain prominence in England through the fact that, under his leadership, the smelting process for copper was greatly improved.[5]

All three were Hebrews who were not born in England.

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1 See, for example, Wolf: *Middle Age*; Lee: *Jews in England before 1643*; Lee: *Elizabethan England and the Jews.* Translator's Note: See also Wolf's 'Jews in Tudor History' (in his *Essays*) and Roth's *Middle Period* [both found in Translator's Bibliography].

2 Hyamson: *History*, p. 98.

3 Wolf: *Middle Age*, p. 55

4 *Idem*, pp. 65-6. Translator's note: Additional information from *Jewish Encyclopedia* (s.v. TREMELLIUS, JOHN IMMANUEL and FERDINAND, PHILIP) and *Dictionary of National Biography* (1899 ed., vol. LVII, pp. 186-7 and vol. XVIII, p. 333 respectively). For more on Ferdinand and his time in the state-run *Domus Conversorum*, the 'Convert's Inn' for Jewish converts to Christianity, see Adler and also Martin [Volume 1 Bibliography], the latter including a facsimile of the receipt for Ferdinand's annual pension. After the initial pre-1290 residents died out (or otherwise left), the Domus was virtually empty over the subsequent centuries but for the occasional entry of itinerant foreign Jews such as Ferdinand.

5 Abrahams: *Joachim Gaunse*, p. 83 ff. Translator's note: In fact, as Abrahams attests, while in England the Prague-born Gaunse [Gans] told Bristol magnates that he had never been baptised a Christian, and that he was a Jew who did not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ or 'any Article of our Christian faithe for that he was not brought uppe therein' (p. 91). He was arrested for blasphemy, but although there is no record of how the Queen's Privy Council dealt with his case, it is likely that he was dealt with leniently due to his scientific talent not just having served oligarchic investments, but also English national security. He is also famed for being the first Jew in English America, having accompanied Raleigh on his 1585 expedition to the New World, where, among other things, he smelted copper on Roanoke Island. See also Grassi [Translator's Bibliography] for more on this fascinating figure.

Rodrigo Lopez, Personal Physician to Queen Elizabeth

Queen Elizabeth placed the greatest trust in her *converso* doctor Rodrigo [Ruy] Lopez, about whom much has been written and who was most likely the model for Shylock in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*.[6]

Lopez, born in Portugal, immigrated to England around 1559[7] after spending a long time in Antwerp. He was one of the great schemers of his time and had a burning desire to get rich as quickly as possible. He soon managed to win the favour of Queen Elizabeth's then favourite, the Earl of Leicester, and before long, had the reputation of being better at poisoning than at healing.[8] But his patron stood behind him to protect him, and so not only was he able to reap great profits, but in 1586 he was even appointed personal physician to the queen,[9] whose special trust he enjoyed and who used to initiate him into the most secret affairs of state. With Elizabeth's knowledge, he came into contact with the Spanish king, whom she deeply hated, and to whom he appeared to be working exclusively in his service. While he initially revealed unimportant things about Spain to the queen, he deliberately concealed from her all the important matters that had become known to him. Later he went a step further and informed Spain about all sorts of details of events at the English court,[10] and even suggested to the king that he poison Elizabeth. He demanded fifty thousand gold escudos, or crowns [equivalent to £18,800 in the English pounds of the day], for this villainous deed, which were to be deposited abroad before the crime. The King of Spain hesitated because of the enormity of the sum; the plan was initially not carried out. Through interception of letters, the plot was uncovered in time and Lopez and two of his co-conspirators were arrested. After the accomplices confessed to their crime, Lopez, when faced with the weight of the evidence, had no choice but to confess his guilt. After a major criminal trial in London, Lopez and his aides were hanged.[11]

There are other Jews to be identified in the Elizabethan period, but they are of marginal interest.[12] Wolf, who has dealt with this topic in more detail, has to admit that there were ‘a large number of unworthy Jews’ during what he designates the ‘Middle Age’ of Anglo-Jewish historiography, but he attributes this to the laws of the time.[13]

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6 Lee: *Elizabethan England*, pp. 146 ff., 166; *Original of Shylock*, p. 195 ff.

7 Dimock, p. 440.

8 Hume, p. 37; Lee p. 159.

9 Dimock, p. 441; Hyamson: *History*, p. 118.

10 Hume, pp. 39, 47.

11 *Calendar of State Papers of Edward IV*, Vol. 1591-1594, pp. 413, 434, 439, 445 ff., 455, 460, 482, 484; Hume, p. 50 ff.; Dimock p. 465 ff. Translator’s note: It should be noted that this was far from a general witch-hunt against Lopez – as Dimock reports (pp. 459-460), the queen called the Earl of Essex a ‘rash and temerarious youth’ in front of the court when she found out that Essex was prosecuting Lopez. From Dimock: ‘She charged him with bringing this ruinous accusation of high treason against her trusty servant from sheer malice, and told him that she knew Lopez to be innocent, and that her honour was at stake in seeing justice done.’ Dimock then describes the violent scene at court before continuing: ‘A point in favour of Lopez having a fair trial was that every one else of weight and influence believed the hare-brained young earl was endeavouring to hunt an enemy to death with nothing substantial to go upon. Burghley and Cecil and Egerton and Coke, [the latter two] the attorney-general and solicitor-general, were inclined to favour the accused, both because of the accuser and of the manner of the accusation.’

12 Wolf: *Jews in Elizabethan England*, p. 1 ff.

13 Wolf: *Middle Age*, p. 79. Translator’s note: From the original source: ‘Our survey has, I hope, not been altogether unpleasing. True, we have met with a large number of unworthy Jews: but it should be remembered that bad men are, to a great extent, the products of bad laws, and the Jews would have been something more than human had they all been able to resist the terrorism of the decree of outlawry, or the shameful bribery of the Domus Conversorum.’

Return and Second Expulsion

No details could be found that would indicate a return of Jews to England in large numbers. But there can be little doubt that the first Marranos – as the baptised Jews from the Iberian Peninsula were usually called – came to the country around 1600. They must have behaved in such a way in England that James I was forced to officially expel them. Although we only have one piece of evidence to prove this, it seems to us to be completely sufficient. Sir Marmaduke Langdale, one of the bravest Royalist generals,[14] who was born at the tail end of the 16th century and died in 1661, certainly heard about the King's ban on the Jews first-hand or at least heard about it from an older contemporary. In a letter dated September 20th, 1655 to Sir Edward Nicholas, Secretary of State to the fugitive Charles Stuart (the future King Charles II), he wrote the following:

> If his Majesty could either have them [the Jews] or divert them from Cromwell, it were a very good service. I heard of this 3 years agone, but hoped the Jewes, that understand the interest of all the princes in the world, had been too wise to adventure themselves and estates under Cromwell, where they may by his death or other alteracion in that kingdome runn the hazard of an absolute ruine; but they hate monarchy and are angry for the patent that was granted by King James to my Lord of Suffolke for the discovery of them, which made most of the ablest of them fly out of England.[15]

Thus he unequivocally mentions the expulsion of the Jews under James I. We tried very hard to find the expulsion decree or any reference to it in the archives, and we especially looked for any documentary reference under the name of Thomas Howard, the first Earl of Suffolk. Howard lived from 1561 to 1626 and, with the exception of a short period during which he was disgraced for an embezzlement offence,[16] held the highest offices in the kingdom until old age.[17] Henry Henriques is the only other scholar who appears to have dealt with this question. In his research, he reports coming across the appointment of the Earl of Suffolk as commissioner for the implementation of a law of expulsion of Jesuits and other subversive Catholics[18] and is of the opinion that Sir Marmaduke's remark is based on this fact. This law applied not only to Jesuits and seminary priests, but also to ‘other Preistes or Persons Ecclesiasticall or Religious whatsoever, made or ordained according to the Order or Rites of the Romishe Church, since the beginning of the Raign of the late Queene of famous Memory *Elizabeth late Queen of England,* being corrupted and brought upp seditiously beyond the Seas or elswhere’. These latter words are actually found in the aforementioned legal provision, and although in terms of sedition one could also say this of the Jews, there are nevertheless doubts as to whether Henriques' position is correct. He seems to have missed the fact that the Earl of Suffolk was often on commissions that had to take action against such subversive Catholics. We first find him on such a commission on September 5th, 1604,[19] which

14 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1892), Vol. XXXII, pp. 95-7.
15 *Nicholas Papers*, Vol. III, p. 51. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (some spelling conventions updated to ensure reader comprehension). Also found at Henriques: *Return*, pp. 70-1.
16 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1891), Vol. XXVII, pp. 71-3.
17 Henriques: *Return*, p. 71.
18 Henriques cites as his sources *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series:* Vol. 1603-1610, p. 148; Vol. 1611-1618 p. 547. [Note that Aldag also references this series as *Domestic State Papers* in his notes.]
19 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVI, p. 597-8. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

was probably connected to the law against '*Jhesuits, Semynaries and Preists* of what sort soever' published on February 22nd of the same year.[20] However, as Henriques also mentions, this commission did not just include the Earl of Suffolk with one or two dignitaries of the realm, but consisted of no fewer than 24 officials and members of the high nobility. The Earl of Suffolk was neither in the first place nor was he endowed with any special authority; he is only mentioned fifth in the list in question. In June 1610 and June 1618, new commissions were established to carry out the same task of banishment.[21] On April 20th, 1620, a long law of similar content was again passed, the implementation of which was entrusted to a commission of 84 officials and members of the church and the nobility – ninth among them the Earl of Suffolk.[22] Likewise, we see that on April 20th, 1622 and in December 1624 new commissions were again established, and in these latter two cases without the Earl of Suffolk.[23] Since the personage of the Earl of Suffolk is by no means particularly highlighted in any of this legislation, there was no reason for Sir Marmaduke to associate him with the expulsion of the Jews. Besides, Sir Marmaduke speaks of a patent from the king, while we have already demonstrated six such laws above. There can be little reason, therefore, to believe that Sir Marmaduke, in his letter to Nicholas, meant all these laws when he speaks of the King's instruction to the Earl of Suffolk, and so we are forced to conclude that the Jews were again expelled from the country under James I. We can only try to guess the reasons for this banishment. But perhaps the law 'Proclamatio contra Exportationem Bullionis', passed on June 11th, 1622 under James I, which strictly prohibited the export of gold and silver bullion due to the existing risk of currency collapse, is a hint to what happened. From the legislation:

> THE KINGES MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY considering the scarcity of Money and Coyne of late Yeares growen within the Realm, occasioned partly by Transportation thereof out of this Kingdom, and partly by the unlawfull Consumption thereof within the Land, whereof many unsufferable Inconveniences doe daily aryse, and more are like to ensue to the general hurt and damage of the whole Commonweale… many covetous and greedy Persons have and dailie doe with great Boldnes and Contempt contynue and proceed in those unlawful and offensive Courses, tending to the exhausting of the Treasure of the Realme, and utter overthrow of Trade and Commerce within the same.
>
> And therefore his Majestie, in his Princely Wisdome and upon necessitie of state, sees it fit that from henceforth all Care and Diligence in the Discoverie, and all Severitie in the Correction and Punishment of such Delinquents without favour to any shall be used… hereby straightly charging and commanding that no Person or Persons Alien, Denizen, or other Subject of what Estate Qualitie or Condition soever, doe at any tyme hereafter, without his *Majestie*'s Licence, transport carry or convey, or attempt or indeavour to transport carrie or convey out of this Realme any Gould or Silver, either in Coyne, Plate, Vessels, Jewels, Goldsmiths Worke, Bullion or other Masse, or otherwise howsoever, upon paine of his *Majestie*'s heavie Indignation and Displeasure…[24]

20 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVI, pp. 572-3. Translator's note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source.
21 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVI, p. 690; Vol. XVII, p. 92.
22 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVII, p. 200 ff.
23 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVII, pp. 367, 644.
24 Rymer: *Foedera*, Vol. XVII, p. 376. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

It is well known that even in Cromwell's time this trade was almost exclusively in Jewish hands. Given that around the year 1660 – apparently as a result of the same cause – a currency crisis occurred again, and one that was severe enough to spark calls for the severe punishment and even expulsion of the Jews as the main participants, it is a reasonable conjecture that this was also a reason for James I to issue an order for the expulsion of the Hebrews.

We have no hesitation in presuming that the Jews were in fact expelled from England for a second time during the reign of James I. As a result, it is not surprising to find them later supporting the Parliamentarians, to whom they also gave every form of support, in the fight against the monarchy.

In order to understand what happened in England, we need to give a brief overview of the Jewish Question in the rest of the known world at the time.

The Jewish Question in the Seventeenth Century

In Spain, as is well known, the Jews exercised a tremendous influence on the economy and administration towards the end of the 15th century. Without exception, they dominated trade with the newly discovered parts of the world, from which they gained immense material advantages.

When in 1492 the call was issued to convert to the Catholic faith or leave the country, most of the Jews resumed their wandering, and largely poured out along the shores of the Mediterranean, where greater or smaller Jewish colonies emerged everywhere.[25]

Nevertheless, their influence in Spain was hardly diminished, because the baptised Jews who remained there already represented the country's financial and economic power. Although these Jews attended Catholic services, they never seriously considered giving up their religion, which they continued to practice in secret. Despite their Jewish art of dissimulation, people soon discovered this fact and the Inquisition began to use the most ruthless means against these baptised Jews, or *Marranos*, as they were called. The word *Marrano* itself is of disputed origin.[26] The persecutions took place in Spain and Portugal at the beginning of the 16th century. As much as was possible, the Marranos fled, and a new wave of Jews flooded the world. Each new persecution resulted in a new wave of Jewish emigration. They took refuge in the newly founded colonies of their ethnic kin and increased their tribe's influence in the cities and countries concerned.[27] The Marranos migrated in particularly large numbers to the European and Asian parts of Turkey.[28] The Levantine trade was almost entirely in their hands, and they increasingly gained footholds in other areas. We even find that Sultan Suleiman had a Jewish personal physician [Moses Hamon], who also served as the ruler's advisor and who steered the sultan towards decisions that were favourable to the Jews.[29] During this time, according to Graetz, Turkey was a haven for the Jews.[30]

The Marranos not only took refuge in places familiar to Europeans from ancient times, but they also went to India, Jakarta and South America.[31]

Although their influence in Spain and Portugal diminished, it was not broken. The Jews knew how to regain their position in the usual way, and so in Spain we find a Marrano as secretary to the king, as well as Jews in the posts of finance minister and *mayordomo mayor* [head of the royal household].[32] The trade in the gold imported from America was still primarily in the hands of the

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25 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 54.

26 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xii, note 2. Translator's note: Wolf's suggestion (from Graetz) is that the word comes from the Aramaic word *Maranatha*, used in the Catholic Church to signal excommunication. However, the Real Academia Española states that the word comes from the Arabic *muharram* ('declared anathema'). It may have been because of this association with the *haram* that the term Marrano became a term used for pig or pork (and by extension 'unclean'), and potentially from this meaning it developed its association with the crypto-Jews, given that the eating of pork, being anathema to the Jews, was a way of detecting crypto-Judaism in so-called New Christians.

27 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. IV, p. 366 ff.

28 Graetz, Vol. IV, p. 360 ff.; Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 63. Translator's note: It should be stated that with the 1492 Expulsion, large numbers of Spanish Jews fled to Turkey, so the Marranos who later emigrated there did so knowing that they live openly as Jews, and join the existing Sephardi colonies there, without fear of persecution.

29 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. IV, p. 406 ff.

30 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. IV, p. 421. Translator's note: 'Haven' is the word used by Graetz.

31 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. IV, p. 366 ff.; Vol. V, pp. 54, 60, 67. Translator's note: Aldag may have meant the East and/or West Indies, given that I do not see India in the original sources, but if that were the case, this would make the listing of Jakarta and/or South America somewhat tautologous. I have therefore stated India [*Indien*], given that this is what is in the original text.

32 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xiii.

Marranos.[33] The Spanish court, which now also ruled Portugal in a personal union, was in debt to the Marranos to the tune of 1,200,000 *cruzados*, an enormous sum for the time.

In Rome, as Lucien Wolf admits, 'the Crypto-Jews commissioned a secret agent supplied with ample funds, who bribed the Cardinals, intrigued against the Holy Office, and frequently obtained the ear of the Pontiff'.[34] Having influence over the Vatican was extremely important to the Marranos because they were formally considered 'New Christians' [c*ristianos nuevos*], and the Inquisition's work against them could usually only be brought to a halt by means of a papal intervention.

33 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 56.

34 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xiii. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

Amsterdam – Centre of International Jewry

It was not enough for the Marranos to have largely monopolised trade in southern Europe and in the other parts of the world that had recently been opened up to commerce; they also wanted to achieve the same in northern Europe. Despite their financially strong position in Spain and Portugal, a large part of the Marranos still preferred to settle in a country whose interests were opposed to those of Spain, where Spanish influence could not pursue them, and where there was an opportunity to carry out their plans of revenge. Their eyes therefore turned to the Dutch Republic, which had decades of experience of fighting the Spanish and where the Nordic spirit of endeavour was not only ready to send its ships to conquer and trade in all seas, but where it would soon come to dominate trade with new parts of the world in complete freedom.

The first negotiations between the Marranos and the Dutch can be seen around 1590, and a short time later the first Marranos were allowed to settle in Holland while maintaining their Jewish religion. Around the year 1593 we find evidence of the first arrivals in Amsterdam,[35] which was later to become the centre of the Marranos or, rather, of international Jewry itself. Jews from Spain and Portugal flocked to the new promised land, and soon there was a large Jewish colony in Amsterdam. They brought with them not only their enormous financial resources, but also, what was at least just as valuable, their global trading connections. These Marranos laid the foundation for Dutch supremacy in the East and West Indies, Jakarta and South America.[36]

However, these Marranos not only received their fellow Sephardic refugees from the Iberian Peninsula, but also numerous co-religionists from Germany who had been driven out by the Thirty Years' War.[37]

Amsterdam had now become the centre of international Jewry, where not only Marranos but also Jews from Turkey, North Africa, and other places came together. At times a ship with Jews arrived every week. When they received legal authorisation to settle and trade in 1615, they felt completely safe in the Dutch Republic. To their chagrin, however, at the same time as the law was passed, marriage between Christians and Jews was forbidden.[38] The wealth of the Jews was indescribable. On one occasion, at a wedding in the Jewish community, the combined wealth of forty of the guests exceeded 40 million florins.[39]

The Hebrews soon felt strong enough to look for further settlements in Northern Europe. At Jewish instigation the King of Denmark sent invitations to Amsterdam. He offered the Jews free exercise of religion and other privileges, and so, needless to say, they accepted. There were also successes in southern Europe, with similar offers made by the Dukes of Savoy and Modena that yielded the same result.

In addition to Amsterdam, Rotterdam also became a prominent Jewish centre. The Jews also appeared in large numbers in Hamburg at the end of the 16th century.[40] There, they first created, and subsequently monopolised, trade with the Iberian Peninsula. They were the sole importers of colonial products such as tobacco, cotton and spices. When in 1619 the Bank of Hamburg was

35 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 50 ff.; Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 200.
36 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 60 ff.
37 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 63.
38 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, pp. 242-3.
39 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 244.
40 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 67.

established, the Marranos took a prominent role in its founding and organisation, and over forty of them were listed on its earliest roll of shareholders.[41] The extensive trade between Hamburg and the Iberian Peninsula is due in part to their connections. One of the Jewish doctors who immigrated to Hamburg even later became the personal physician to Queen Christina of Sweden.[42]

However, the most important Jewish colony after Amsterdam was in Brazil, where the Portuguese were the first European colonisers. They had originally sent the Marranos there as a punishment, but after a short time they had resumed their trading activities. When the Dutch invaded Brazil around 1624, they found the greatest possible support in their campaign from the Marranos who lived there. After the Dutch conquered Brazil, the Marranos immediately established contact with their fellow 'Dutch' Jews and, like them, immediately openly reverted back to their own religion. Hundreds of Portuguese Jews left Amsterdam and sailed to Brazil. We find Jews in all of the important places; their largest settlement was in Pernambuco. Trade and plantations were almost entirely in their hands, and in a short time they had accumulated great wealth. Amsterdam remained the centre of trade and exchange, but more and more Jews moved to Brazil.[43]

In France, too, the Marranos managed to obtain great influence in trade and finance, but they were not allowed to practice their Judaism openly, instead having to appear entirely as Christians to the outside world.[44]

These migrations of the Marranos, their settlements and their influence in the world of that time are so interesting that it would be worth writing an entire book about them. They laid the foundation for modern international Jewry.

It is not surprising that the Marranos also tried to gain a foothold in England. Since the expulsion of the Jews in 1290, England's economic structure had fundamentally changed. While England was more or less purely an agricultural state at the time of Edward I, the beginnings of its own significant industry can be seen under the rule of Queen Elizabeth. England's external power had also greatly increased. English ships ploughed the seas all over the world. The preeminent position of Spain and Portugal, especially in the newly discovered parts of the world, was in decline at the start of the 17th century, and England was increasingly proving herself to be one of Spain's most formidable opponents. All of which gave the Marranos a special incentive to settle in England.

41 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 229.
42 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 70-1.
43 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 73-5.
44 Graetz, *Popular History,* Vol. V, p. 75.

Marranos in England

For a long time it was not clear whether there was a large colony of Marranos in England at the beginning of the 17th century, but according to the latest research this seems to be the case. First of all, it has already been indicated by James I's aforementioned expulsion law, but the work of the Jewish historian Lucien Wolf also shines a light on the situation.

Wolf puts the earliest arrival of Marranos into England at 1493. To support this assertion, he refers to documentation in old state archives that allows the names of Jews to be identified.[45]

In England, however, the Marranos, even under the adopted cloak of Christianity, faced great difficulties in settling in larger numbers.

The Marranos belonged to the Catholic Church. In England, however, due to ongoing issues with acceptance of the Reformation, certain laws had been passed to protect the new 'Church of England', which mainly fell into two categories. One punished the practice or propagation of a religious doctrine that was incompatible with the new Anglican dogma, the other punished non-participation in Church of England services. The former provision was the Act of Supremacy of 1534 (renewed under Elizabeth I in 1558), the latter the Act of Uniformity of 1558.[46]

As Catholics, the Marranos were affected by both laws, and their outward display of Christianity was no longer of any use to them. However, after 1612, an infringement of the law against heresy no longer brought the same severe punishment. It must be said, nevertheless, that in those days one could never know whether some exceptional circumstance would lead to a stricter application of the law. In fact, this law can only truly be said to be toothless after it was amended by a special law in 1640 so that only clerical punishments could be imposed.[47]

The second category of law to enforce religious orthodoxy, the Act of Uniformity, is particularly interesting: in the event of non-compliance, or 'recusancy', there was at first the risk of a moderate financial penalty, while later versions of the act brought a penalty of very severe fines [the Act of Persuasions 1581], or even imprisonment [the Popish Recusants Act 1592].[48] The Marranos neither desired nor were able to take part in the Church of England services, whether as Catholics or as Jews. But given that the laws applied to every person in England regardless of nationality, as long as said laws existed, the Marranos were not able to remain in England.

In 1630, a peace treaty [commonly known today as the Treaty of Madrid (1630)] was concluded between England and Spain in a bid to settle their ongoing hostilities and to restore trade relations between the two nations. Among other things, the treaty stipulated a mutual obligation to fundamentally exempt from their respective religious laws nationals of the other's state who were in their country (or a third country) for the purposes of commerce. This secured access to England for the Marranos, and there can be little doubt that some of them settled in England shortly after the treaty came into force.[49] It is perhaps not too bold to claim that the Marranos, with their great influence at the Spanish court, likely did everything they could to bring about this treaty between England and Spain, and perhaps initiated it themselves. Our thesis regarding their influence may not

45 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xiv; *Crypto-Jews*, p. 57-8.
46 Henriques: *Return*, p. 17. Translator's note: I have added additional information to the text for clarity. Note that these 1558 Acts are sometimes referred to as 1559 Acts, as they were not signed into law until the following year.
47 Henriques: *Return*, p. 17 ff.
48 Henriques: *Return*, p. 29 ff. Translator's note: See also Hyamson: *History*, p. 128.
49 Henriques: *Return*, pp. 31-32.

even go as far as that of the Jewish historian Lucien Wolf, who claims that the Marranos ‘played an important part in the story which culminated in the confusion of the Great Armada’.[50] The Jewish historian Cecil Roth also states how a certain Jew, Hector Nunes [1520-1591], who served as a physician in England, who was well connected internationally due to his trading activities, and who enjoyed the complete confidence of both of Queen Elizabeth's great ministers, Burleigh and Walsingham, ‘actually brought the latter the first news of the arrival of the Great Armada at Lisbon on its way to the English channel’, thus enabling the English government to take countermeasures in good time.[51]

Although it is no longer possible to determine exactly when Marranos came to England in large numbers, it was probably not much later than 1635, given that, in 1655, the wealthiest and most influential of them, Antonio Fernandez Carvajal, was granted British denizenship by Cromwell. From Carvajal’s surviving Patent of Denization, we learn that the Jewish merchant had ‘for the space of twenties yeares and upwards been an Inhabitant in this nacon’.[52]

50 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xv. Translator’s note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source.

51 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 256. Translator’s note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source. Scholars today widely recognise Nunes’ role as a diplomat and spy. As an interesting side note, Nunes illegally bought a black African to be his slave in London after the unfortunate man had been captured from the Spanish, and brought to England on an English ship. When the man refused to be Nunes’ slave, the doctor attempted to bring a court case against him, but under English law he could not force the unnamed African man to ‘tarry and serve’ him. Nunes also had African female ‘servants’ working for him in his London home. See the following article by Miranda Kaufmann, specialist in Black British history, for further information: https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/african-freedom-in-tudor-england-dr-hector-nuness-request

52 Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 45. Translator’s note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source.

Antonio Fernandez Carvajal, the Rothschild of the Seventeenth Century

This chapter will be devoted to providing the reader with a detailed profile of the man known to posterity as Antonio Fernandez Carvajal, as the general history of the Jews in England up until the year 1655 can effectively be told in terms of the commercial dealings of this singular figure. Carvajal, known in his own community as Abraham Israel Carvajal, was also the first member of his people in England to assist the government in financial matters. Throughout the centuries that followed, we find other Jews, similar to Carvajal, being financial advisors to the English government and exercising considerable influence in government affairs of all kinds.

When he was young, Carvajal had lived in Fundão, one of the then commercial centres of Portugal with a large colony of Marranos. The persecution of the Inquisition caused him to leave Portugal and he apparently took refuge in the Canary Islands, where trade and the collection of taxes were then almost exclusively in the hands of the Marranos.[53]

There is no precise information about the reason for his moving to England, but it can safely be assumed that it was to develop trade between England and Spain.

As is well known, in Spain the production of manufactured goods experienced an ever greater decline due to the large quantities of gold and silver being imported from the newly discovered Americas, as the wealth that poured into the country caused interest in any kind of work to dwindle accordingly. England, on the other hand, was in the process of building up her industry and needed raw commodities such as wool and minerals, which she hoped to obtain from Spain. In a short time, lively trade relations were established between the two countries, and the English merchant made big profits from these transactions, with returns of up to 100% being by no means uncommon.[54] On the Spanish side, business was mostly carried out by Marranos, while the English counter-party initially consisted almost entirely of Englishmen, who were later replaced more and more by Marranos until finally the trade was almost entirely in Marrano hands. Carvajal was probably induced by the promise of rich pickings to make his way to England.

He must have experienced a rapid rise in England, because he soon had his own ships with which he traded not only in Spain, but also in the East and West Indies, Brazil, Syria and all distant parts of the world wherever there was trade to be carried out and Marranos had settled. He had representatives in every major trading centre on the European continent,[55] and where he did not have his own agents, he found all of the necessary support from the Marranos who lived there.

Apparently he was on good terms with the English government from the earliest days, because when a complaint was made against him in 1645 for ‘recusancy’, that is, failing to comply with the law regarding attendance of [Anglican] church services, not even a preliminary investigation was opened. And this despite the fact that, even if the previously described agreement with Spain existed, it was more than doubtful that this law also applied to Carvajal as a Portuguese national, especially since there was no express agreement to this effect.[56] The complainant, Will Sherman, was even summoned to the House of Lords and roundly upbraided for his pains.[57] This reaction by officialdom appears particularly unusual when one considers the conditions in England

53 Wolf: *First English Jew*, pp. 14-5; *Crypto-Jews*, p. 77 ff.
54 Baker, p. 3 ff.
55 Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 16.
56 Henriques: *Return*, pp. 31-2.
57 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 56; *Hist. Com Reports*, VI, p. 42. See also Hyamson: *History*, p. 136.

at the time, which were anything but favourable to foreigners. However, when one further learns that Carvajal had the closest relations with a government minister,[58] it is not difficult to draw the necessary conclusions about the outcome of the criminal complaint and his connection to the government. The government's favouring of Carvajal in later times is quite blatant.

In 1650, war broke out between England and Portugal. As a Portuguese subject, Carvajal was an enemy alien and there was nothing to stop the state from confiscating all of his assets. However, not only was he spared such a fate, but he was also assured by a State Council resolution of September 4th, 1650 that he would not be troubled and that he could continue his trade.[59] It is left to the reader to surmise how Carvajal came to receive such favour. Whatever the case, it is likely that his money played a significant role.

Carvajal abused his special government-granted position by having goods from Portuguese – likely Jewish – merchants, who were friends of his and who as enemy aliens were no longer able to trade in England, entered under his name in the customs register. Apparently the government was informed of this and initiated extensive investigations against him. Wolf, who studied Carvajal's life in detail, was not able to discover the outcome of the criminal proceedings. In his opinion, the courts probably did not find anything incriminating against him, but this does not seem to entirely correlate with the documents we have seen. The remaining minutes of the Council of State clearly show that the confiscated goods were not released because of the strong suspicion against him. According to the minutes of October 9th, 1650,[60] a postponement apparently took place because the relevant witnesses were not present, but the main hearing took place on October 11th, 1650.[61] Carvajal was questioned closely by the Admiralty Committee, with the authorities particularly desirous to know whether the confiscated goods really belonged to him:

> …and upon examination, Fernandez would give no positive answer whether the bayes in question were his own proper goods, and whether he did not declare that, in case it should be proved that any other had an interest in them, his whole estate should be liable to confiscation; but at last confessed that he bought them with his own money, upon his own account, and that he intended to send 38 pieces of the bayes to Francisco Botelio Chacone and Thome Botelio Silveria, in Portugal, but on account of the troubles there, they ordered him last June to forbear doing so, and to remit the money to Holland. This, with the affidavit annexed, is all his answer. The committee further asking him whether 38 pieces of the bayes in question were shipped; he answered, no; also whether he shipped any for Lisbon in [to?] the Brazil merchant, to which he replied that 40 pieces were consigned to the parties aforesaid, and that the 38 pieces were to be consigned to the same parties, had he not received orders to the contrary. The committee therefore think that the said bayes still remain under suspicion, and should not be delivered.[62]

58 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 56.
59 Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 28; *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1650, p. 558.
60 *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1650, p. 377.
61 *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1650, p. 380.
62 *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1650, p. 380. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

The case mentioned was apparently not the only one. Already on October 31st of the same year, we find a report according to which Carvajal also claimed that another shipment of goods belonged to him and not to certain Portuguese merchants. Unfortunately, nothing can be determined about the outcome of this inquiry. However, given his relationship with the government, it was probably not too difficult for him to have the proceedings dropped, as in a much more serious criminal case in which he had still not been brought to justice after more than a year.

In 1658, a consignment of a hundred tons of West Indian logwood from the Canary Islands belonging to Carvajal, valued at around £15,000, was seized by customs authorities. The merchant was informed of the confiscation and informed that the logwood would only be delivered upon a specific declaratory document from the government. The report from the customs officer responsible, Timothy Whiting, shows that the seizure was due to a gross understatement of the timber's real value. Instead of dealing with the customs authorities, Carvajal filed a charge against the enforcement officer himself, causing him to be arrested. The merchant worked with a number of other Marranos and also Englishmen to do this, and so was able to ensure that the official in question was only allowed to go free if he provided security. Seeing however that Whiting had managed to post bail, Carvajal then turned to the Admiralty court to get his foe out of the way. Here, based on forged evidence, he managed to get the officer arrested again and taken to an obscure place where he could not even get in touch with friends to tell them of his predicament. The poor man was only released after three days. In the meantime, Carvajal had used the help of confederates to break open the government warehouse and move all of the logwood to an unknown location.

From the official submission to Cromwell that has come down to us, we also see that the customs authorities demanded severe punishment. It was rightly pointed out that, if this punishment were not to take place, the most unpleasant consequences would result for future attempts at upholding the law. The petitioner, Timothy Whiting himself, stated that:

> …if such high Actings and misdemeanours of the sayd Ferdinando, and his Complices, shall goe unpunisht, it wil bee a great discouragement to the officers of your Highnes, in discharge of Their Dutys and, an emboldning to Merchants and others (as alredy it is) to withdraw their Customes, and Duty, and to committ the like outrages for the time to come.[63]

Although this petition for justice was made on August 19th, 1658, there is not the slightest evidence of any punitive measure against Carvajal leading up to the news of his death in November 1659.[64] Hyamson claims that there was a case pending under Richard Cromwell, Oliver Cromwell's son, but that it was ended by the merchant's demise.[65] However, he does not provide a source for this claim. All in all, it is reasonable to assume that Carvajal prevented consequences against

63 *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1658/1659, p. 116; Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 38. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (Wolf). Wolf (p. 23) also obliquely admits to Carvajal's guilt in the crime (or 'highhanded proceeding', to use Wolf's phrase), which by the author's slick presentation of events sounds like a cross between a jape and a fit of spleen: 'His nature was choleric even in old age, for in 1658, when he had a dispute with the Commissioners of Customs over a cargo of logwood which had been seized by them, he collected a number of his friends, secured the Customs surveyor on board one of his ships, broke open the Government warehouses, and carried off his merchandise. When he died, a special committee of the Council of State, which had originally been presided over Richard Cromwell, was enquiring into this highhanded proceeding.'

64 Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 22.

65 Hyamson: *History*, p. 137. Translator's note: It is likely that Hyamson used Wolf as his source (see note 63).

himself due to his friends in high places. It is not even known if he was forced to return the stolen logwood.

Apparently Carvajal was not particularly ethical in his other business dealings either, as shown by the following court case that has come down to us.

In 1642, a ship arrived in Southampton with a valuable cargo. Due to a notification that the ship and cargo had been brought there without the owner's consent, the government initially seized the ship and cargo and later handed them over to the recipients in return for a deposit of £500,000.

Part of the cargo, which actually belonged to the merchant de Lazon, was sold by Carvajal as agent for a certain Diaz of Rouen, and the purchase money received was supposedly sent to third parties in Spain. In any case, he did everything he could to avoid giving justice to the real owner, who spent three years trying to enforce his claims in England. It was bad enough that he was left with nothing to live on – but then he was even thrown into prison for a year because of debts that had arisen as a result of the delay in the trial. It is not clear from the document why de Lazon was unable to enforce his claims, but the official report leaves no doubt that he was badly wronged.[66]

In any event, based on the substance of the official account of this case, de Lazon's ownership and the inexplicable treatment he received in this matter are perfectly clear. Then again, since Carvajal's involvement and his interests, which are undoubtedly contrary to de Lazon's claim, have also been proven, de Lazon’s claim that Carvajal made false representation is likely to be correct. Perhaps it is also due to the latter's influence with the English authorities that de Lazon only gained what was rightfully his after three years.

It is interesting for Jewish historiography that this character flaw of the so-called ‘first English Jew’ has not been properly discussed by such a diligent researcher as Wolf. Perhaps he was too embarrassed by these facts, especially since he makes the following leading statement about Carvajal’s character: ‘For the rest, his epitaph bears testimony to his hospitality, his generosity to the poor, his truthfulness and his high sense of honour.’[67]

The above statements are sufficient to show Carvajal's international connections and his influence on the English government.

In addition to Carvajal, it is also worth mentioning the singular personages of Simon [Jacob] de Caceres and Henrique Mendes da Costa.

Caceres was born in Amsterdam and had travelled all over the world. He had seemingly unlimited trading connections, and his main interests lay not only in London and Hamburg, but also in the West Indies and South America. He later served as Cromwell's economic advisor on certain colonial matters and also served the king of Denmark and Queen Christine of Sweden in a similar capacity.[68]

Mendes was heavily involved in the Jewish banks of Lisbon and Antwerp, which formed a huge corporation and played the same role in Europe at the end of the 16th century as the Rothschild banking house did in the 19th and 20th centuries. One of Mendes’ relatives, Joseph Nasi,

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66 See Wolf: *First English Jew,* Appendix, for a reproduction of the extant original documents of the case.

67 Wolf: *First English Jew*, p. 23. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. As for the author’s supposition that Wolf was ‘too embarrassed’ to tell the truth, one should also consider the alternative suppositions: 1) ethnocentric self-deception, or 2) this was a cynical exercise in ethnic propaganda. The Jewish Hyamson (*History*, pp. 136-7) has the following apologia for Carvajal’s criminal behaviour: ‘Carvajal’s character seems to have partaken more of the Spaniard than of the Jew.’ (!)

68 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 73-4; *American Elements*, p. 97; *Re-Settlement*, p. 5; Hyamson: *History*, p. 137.

conquered Cyprus for the Turks and was later made Duke of Naxos and Prince of the Cyclades. Mendes was also a close collaborator of Carvajal.[69] Although there are still many wealthy Jews based in England with international connections who could be discussed, for the purposes of this study we shall limit ourselves to two: Antonio Rodrigues Robles and Augustin Coronel Chacon, who served as secret agents for the English Royalists during Cromwell's reign.[70]

After a great deal of research, the Jewish historian Lucien Wolf discovered that only about 26 male Marranos had settled in England by the year 1655.[71] We have no reason to reject this estimate, but in the course of our presentation of Jewish history under Cromwell we will show the level of influence that this colony of Jews, so small in number yet so powerful in resources, had on the politics of England.

Without the need for Wolf's careful research, it can be taken as a certainty that the Marranos secretly adhered to their Jewish faith and probably also had some kind of synagogue, because wherever there were Marranos in the world, they posed as Christians to wider society, while secretly observing the rites and ceremonies of Judaism.[72]

In conclusion, we can be sure that there was a small but powerful group of Marranos who had already settled in England at the start of the Jews' political manoeuvring under Cromwell.

69 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 5. Hyamson: *History*, p. 137.

70 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 74-5.

71 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 67. Translator's note: It should be borne it mind that many, if not most, of these men would be heads of family, the rest of the family not being counted in this tally. In addition, elsewhere (*Re-Settlement*; *Jewish Chronicle*, 9/12/1887, p. 14) Wolf has said the following regarding Jewish numbers prior to the Cromwellian negotiations: 'How many more Jews there were in London at this time it is impossible to say. We many assume, however, that for everyone who can be identified there were at least two or three who baffle detection, and these, with their wives and children, would make a community of about two hundred souls.'

72 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 55 ff.

Philo-Semitic Puritanism

In 1652, civil war broke out in England, a war which led Charles I to the scaffold and Cromwell to power. It was mainly the Puritan faction among the Parliamentarians [also known as the Roundheads] to whom the revolution owed its victorious outcome. In the words of the Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, who clearly sympathised with the Puritans:

> He [Cromwell] and his army fought for religious liberty for themselves and others. He and his officers were not bloodthirsty mercenaries in search of booty, but warriors filled with the spirit of God, who dreamed of establishing a theocracy and undertook its accomplishment. The Puritan warriors, like the Maccabeans of old, went to battle with the praise of God in their mouths and the sword in their hands. Cromwell and his soldiers read the Bible before and after an engagement. But the 'Roundheads' were inspired to courage and enthusiasm not by the New but solely by the Old Testament. The Christian Bible, with its Essenic, monkish forms, offered no model for warriors who had to declare war on a perjured king, a faithless aristocracy and unholy priests. Only the great heroic figures of the Old Testament who had the fear of God in their hearts while fighting, sword in hand, for their God and their nation could serve as a model for the Puritans; the judges who freed their people from the foreign yoke; Saul, David, Joab, who routed the enemies of their nation; Jehu, who exterminated an idolatrous and wicked dynasty – such were the favourite heroes of the Puritanic warriors. Each verse of the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings mirrored their own situation; each Psalm seemed peculiarly adapted to their own condition. Oliver Cromwell seemed another Gideon who, at first reluctant in obeying the voice of God, afterward routed the heathen hordes with heroic courage, or another Judas Maccabeus, who converted a handful of martyrs into a victorious army.[73]

Original English names were replaced by Jewish ones from the Old Testament, and the Lion of Judah was placed on the victorious banners of the Puritans. The period under Stuart rule was known as the 'Egyptian Bondage'.[74] It was even seriously suggested that Saturday should replace Sunday as the real Sabbath. English people travelled the continent to have learned conversations with rabbis, and there were even Puritans who converted to Judaism.[75] Given all of this, it is not surprising that in Puritan circles, which had become the dominant force in the English Commonwealth since 1649, there was a keen interest in the Jews living on the Continent. All in all, there was little real difference between the Puritans and the Jews. In both we find the closest connection between business and religion and the rationalisation of life. Both adhere to the principle that everything that is necessary for good business is also morally justified. Thus Werner Sombart came to the conclusion that 'Puritanism *is* Judaism'.[76]

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73 Graetz, Vol. V, pp. 102-3. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim for original source.
74 Hyamson: *History*, pp. 129-30.
75 Hyamson: *British Projects*, p. 1 ff.
76 Sombart, p. 249. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim for original source.

With their admiration for the Jews, the Puritans could not imagine that the desired conversion of the Jews to Christianity, which was often sought after, was based on a lack of goodwill towards the Jews. Rather, they considered the previous methods used to attempt this to be wrongheaded. In their view, the Jews had been unjustly ill-treated at all times in history, as the scholar and politician John Sadler, who was close to Cromwell, publicly expressed.[77] As a result, above all, kind treatment of the Jews was demanded.[78] The Puritans viewed conversion attempts through missions and other efforts on the continent as inexpedient, and wanted the Jews to come to England in as large numbers as possible in order to make it clear to them with word and deed the necessity of converting to Christianity. As early as 1614, a certain Leonard Busher published an open letter to the king and Parliament, which largely dealt with this question. Persecution, he argued, would only make the Jews more obstinate:

> …because if persecution be not laid downe, and liberty of conscience set up, then cannot the Jewes, nor any strangers, nor others contrary mynded be ever converted in our Land: for so long as they know a fore hand, that they shal be forced to beleeve against their consciences, they wil never seeke to inhabit there: by which meanes you keep them from the Apostolic faith, if the Apostolic faith bee onely taught where persecution is.[79]

These statements, which were not published until 1646, reinforced the Puritans' pro-Jewish stance. Sir Edward Spencer's optimistic treatise on the topic, published in 1650, also contributed strongly to this general attitude. In this member of Parliament's view, which he addressed to the Jewish activist Menasseh ben Israel, '…it will be a very glorious action, if wee can convert your Nation of the *Jewes* to the fulnesse of true beliefe. And indeed I beleeve we are the likelyest Nation under Heaven to doe it.'[80] This also reflects the Puritan belief, which is still widespread in England today, that the British are God's chosen people. Spencer formulated the conditions under which the Jews should come to England, many of which obviously amount to giving them advantages in the event of conversion. They were to be allowed to trade throughout England, but he proposed double taxation as long as they belonged to the Jewish religion. He did not want to allow Jewish fraternities or similar associations, just as marriages between Jews and Christians were to be banned. Even a large portion of the Puritan clergy supported Jewish readmission, as Hyamson points out[81] and as we shall see later.

In addition to all of these idealistic voices, as always in England, there were also pragmatic ones, and it was publicly admitted that the Jews had to be allowed back into England in order to improve trade.[82] As well as business activity, the Jews were also expected to bring large amounts of capital into the country.

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77 Sadler: *Rights of the Kingdom*, p. 74. Translator's note: There appears to be an error with this reference.
78 Godwin, Vol. IV, p. 245.
79 Busher: *Religions Peace*, p 7. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original 1614 source.
80 Spencer, p. 2. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
81 Hyamson: *History*, p. 131.
82 Nicholas, p. 15. Translator's note: (quoted from source) 'That our receiving them again, and giving them all possible satisfaction, and restoring them to commerce in this kingdom, may be exemplary to other Nations that have done them, and continue to do them wrong…'

Numerous pamphlets published in favour of the Jews' readmittance to England influenced public opinion then as now. Sometimes it seems as if the art of printing was invented for the Jews, because we all know to what extent they use this facility to serve their agenda. So from that point in history onwards, one sees rivers of printer's ink pour out in England whenever the Jews want to accomplish something. Since newspapers were still in their earliest infancy at that time, they were out of the question for reaching the people, and it was the pamphlets alone that made the no small contribution to the return of Jews to England.

Busher's aforementioned treatise of 1614, framed as an open letter, is probably the earliest of the form. Among other treatises, one worthy of mention is the 1647 tract by Hugh Peters, *A Word for the Army, and Two Words to the Kingdom*. It is notable because of the author's close association with Cromwell. Peters was the army chaplain and more or less Cromwell's pastor. He played a significant role in the condemnation of Charles I, for which he was executed after the return of the Stuarts in 1660.[83]

In all of the various writings of that period one should not forget the work published by pamphleteer Edward Nicholas in 1648.

Nicholas' work is an incomprehensible screed, and excerpts such as the following are typical of its style:

> But the sin principally intended here, is, The strict and cruel Laws now in force against the most honorable Nation of the world, the Nation of the Jews, a people chosen by God, as appears by the many and large expressions of his favour to them, stiling them, *His Gems, his first-born, a precious people above all peoples of the earth, a kingdom of priests, an holy people unto himself*: And further saith, they are his own servants, and should not be in bondage to any, being onely to serve six years, and the seventh to go out free, and in the year of Jubile, every man was to return to his inheritance: But above all, that priviledge of theirs, the benefit whereof hath an influence on all the faithful, and redounds to their happiness, *That in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:* So strong an obligation are we bound in to them through Gods mercy.[84]

In his opinion, it was time to repeal the laws that were unfavourable to Jews. He hoped that men would soon arise in England who would put an end to such infamy. The author further believed that all the misery of the English civil wars of that time was God's vengeance for the persecution of His holy favourites. It would therefore be the duty of everyone to do everything in their power to atone for the innocently shed blood of the Jews and to bring about a close community and friendship with them.[85]

To this day it is not clear who was behind the name Edward Nicholas. Was it King Charles I's secretary, Sir Edward Nicholas, or was it a Marrano hiding behind this pseudonym? Some writers suspect that the man behind this pro-Jewish writing was the Jew Menasseh ben Israel, who is the

83 Hyamson: *History*, p. 132.
84 Nicholas, p. 4. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
85 Nicholas, p. 6 ff.

subject of a later chapter.[86] Although definitive evidence to prove the case is lacking, circumstantial evidence lends plausibility to the latter hypothesis.

A book by Roger Williams, the famous Baptist, also caused a stir. Williams had already founded a community in America in which there was unrestricted freedom of belief and conscience. In his publications he strongly advocated for the Jews. They might be heretics, he wrote, but that did not in itself mean that they could not become good citizens:

> For who knows not but that many seducing teachers, either of the paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or anti-christian religion, may be clear and free from scandalous offences in their life, as also from disobedience to the civil laws of a state? Yea, the answerer himself hath elsewhere granted, that if the laws of a civil state be not broken, the peace is not broken.[87]

The remarks of the aforementioned scholar and politician John Sadler deserve particular interest. As a friend of Cromwell's, he may have had a considerable influence on the Lord Protector; his thoughts are more than strange to us. It is an extensive work that is difficult to read due to its incoherent structure. He may have been one of the first to claim that the English were descended from the Israelites, and he believes he can find many similarities between English and Israelite laws and customs.[88] The constitutional arrangement under the previous English kings was that decisions about war and peace were more or less dependent on the decisions of the Great Council [*Magnum Concilium*], which could be compared with the power of the Sanhedrin. It is therefore not surprising that Sadler was extremely fond of the Jews and stood up for them. It is strange that in England this doctrine about the ancestry of the British, known as British Israelism or Anglo-Israelism, was not simply dismissed as legend. Instead, scholars such as Rogers and Milner, Burt, Shirley Smith – to name a few – have written about the topic. People even go as far as to claim that the current British royal family is directly descended from the house of King David.[89] Not only does this question haunt the minds of scholars, but even today there is an association in England founded to propagate this idea. Their speakers are still trying to convince their listeners of the correctness of this theory at the famous Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park, close to Marble Arch. Ancient and biblical prophesies, for example, the idea that the Jews should be scattered all over the world and that the sun should never set on the empire, are applied to Great Britain. One may smile at such teachings, but one thing is certain: the Jews welcome them, because they can only serve the Jewish cause in England. How much greater an impression must Sadler's book have made on the Puritans, who were favourable to the Jews, especially since they viewed themselves as God's chosen people.

Of the large number of pro-Jewish pamphlets, it is worth mentioning the one written by John Dury, whose aim was to unite all of the different sects of Protestantism. For this purpose he travelled all over Europe and tried to overcome the greatest difficulties. Because of this he became very well known, and as a result many people paid attention to his statements on the Jewish

86 Hyamson: *History*, p. 132, note 1.
87 Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent*, p. 141. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (1848 reproduction – see Bibliography).
88 Sadler, p. 8 ff.
89 Sadler, p. 47 ff.

Question.[90] This overview of the abundant literature produced in the first half of the 17th century will suffice for our purposes.

There were also pamphlets which were fundamentally in favour of allowing Jews to live in England, but which on the other hand openly pointed out the downsides to this. In his writing, John Weemse described to his compatriots the current despicable condition of the Jews,[91] but believed that this could be positively influenced by baptism. The prerequisite, of course, was that the Christians themselves did not put too many obstacles in the way of the Jews.[92] Later, Christians and Jews would only have one church,[93] which wouldn't be difficult, especially since Jesus Christ himself was a Jew.[94]

We have seen that there was no lack of philo-Semitic literature, which gradually prepared the ground for Jewish endeavours. So it is not surprising that we see the following news at the end of 1648:

> Monday, Decem. 25.: Notice was given of what passed in the Councell of Mechanicke at Whitehall on Saturday, where they voted a toleration of all religions whatsoever, not excepting Turkes nor Papists nor Jewes.' *Pragmaticus*, Dec. 19-26.[95]

This decision was also endorsed by the Council of War.

On January 5th, 1649, a formal petition for the readmission of the Jews was presented to Lord Fairfax and the General Council. It came from Johanna Cartwright, a widow, and her son Ebenezer, two Puritans who had settled in Amsterdam.[96] They probably belonged to the aforementioned category of Puritans who revered the Jewish religion so much that they either converted to this faith themselves or lived completely under its spell. Given this and the fact that the large Jewish community in Amsterdam was the soul of the resettlement effort, one can assume that the request was made at the instigation of the Jews there. The Cartwrights did not just hand over the petition, but had it printed and published [*The Petition of the Jews* (1649)], an additional factor which strongly indicates that the Jews had a hand in proceedings.

In the aforementioned petition, the applicants complained of the 'intolerable cruelty of this our English nation' which had caused Jewish suffering prior to the Expulsion, suffering for which England should seek to appease the wrath of God for the 'innocent blood shed' by repealing 'the cruel, inhumane Statute of banishment' and readmitting the Jews to England 'under the Christian banner of charity and brotherly love'. This was especially important, given that the time of Second Coming 'draweth nigh', which would see the Jews 'come to know the Emanuell, the Lord of light, life and glory' and be given their promised land. In consequence, the petition hoped that,'this nation of ENGLAND, with the inhabitants of the Nether-lands, shall be the first and readiest to transport

90 Levy, p. 76.
91 Weemse, p. 295 ff.
92 Weemse, p. 339 ff.
93 Weemse, p. 370.
94 Weemse, p. 378.
95 Clarke Papers, Vol. II, p. 172, note A. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Note also the date of the event, evidencing the Puritan ban on Christmas.
96 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 7.

IZRAELLS Sons & Daughters in their Ships to the Land promised to their fore-Fathers, ABRAHAM, ISAAC and JACOB, for an everlasting inheritance'.[97]

Contrary to expectations, the General Council's response was disappointing for the Jews and their fellow travellers. The Council agreed in principle to consider the petition favourably, 'with a promise to take it into speedy consideration when the present more publick affairs are dispatched'.[98] Unfortunately for the petitioners, the situation at that time was extremely tense, with the ongoing proceedings against King Charles I, his subsequent execution, and the settlement of the state, all of which took up the totality of the government's energies for a long time.

Perhaps the active assistance of the Jews in the above petition can also be inferred from the fact that they themselves submitted a similar application to the Council of War at almost the same time. In particular, they wanted the 1290 Edict of Expulsion to be repealed. The Jews did not ask permission for anything, but rather proposed a transactional arrangement, in which they would pay £500,000, an enormous sum for the time. However, this cash offer came with strings attached, namely, the almost incredible condition that St. Paul's Cathedral and the Bodleian Library in Oxford would be given to the Jews as their own property for their free use. As is well known, St. Paul's Cathedral is one of the largest English national shrines alongside Westminster Abbey, while the Bodleian Library is one of the five largest libraries in England. The Jews wanted to turn the cathedral into a synagogue and convert the library into a Jewish school.

The negotiations of 1649 failed, although not because of a lack of willingness on the part of the English government. On the contrary, the government was only too willing to accept this deal in principle, the only sticking point being the price, which it considered too low, and a counter-offer was made for £700,000 or, according to another report, as much as £800,000.[99] Perhaps there was no agreement on the price, or perhaps there was too much public indignation to allow the sale of these national shrines.

In light of this information, the contemporary pamphlet *The last damnable Designe of Cromwell and Ireton and their Junto or Caball* is very revealing, as the following excerpt shows:

> Their next designe is, to Plunder, and Dis-arme the City of London, and all the Country round about; thereby to disable them to rise when the Army removes, but not to the use of the Souldiers, (although they greedily expect the first Week in *February* the time appointed) from whom they will redeeme the Plunder at an easie rate; and so sell it in bulk to the Jewes, whom they have lately admitted to set up their banks, and magazins of Trade amongst us, contrary to an Act of Parliament for their banishment; and these shall be their Merchants to buy off for ready money, (to maintain such Warres as their violent proceedings will inevitably bring upon them) not only all Sequestred, and Plundred goods, but also the very Bodies of Men, Women, and Children, whole

97 *Clarke Papers*, Vol. II. p. 172, note A; Wolf: *American Elements*, pp. 87-8. Translator's note: All quoted elements reproduced verbatim from Wolf, who reproduces the full petition as it was printed in the 1649 pamphlet.

98 Hyamson: *History*, p. 134. Translator's note: Quoted element as per previous translator's note.

99 Walker, Vol. II, p. 60; Carte, Vol. I, p. 276; Tovey, p. 259; Blunt, p. 68; Menteith, p. 473; Picciotto, p. 25; *Hansard*, Vol. 125, p. 87 [Jewish Disabilities Bill (HC Debate 11 March 1853)]; *Hansard*, Vol. 141, p. 726 ff. [Oath of Abjuration Bill – HC Debate 9 April 1856]. Blunt also refers to a letter from Thurloe. His citation is correct except for the volume and page number. It is not Vol. III, p. 357, but Vol. I, p. 387. Translator's note: The sources (e.g. Menteith) also reveal that the Jews' purchase offer was solicited by Hugh Peters and Harry Marten, who acted as the Jews' brokers in the proposed deal.

> Families taken Prisoners for sale, of whom these Jewish Merchants shall keep a constant traffique with the *Turks*, *Moores*, and other *Mahometans;* the *Barbadus*, and other *English* Plantations being already cloyed with *Welch*, *Scottish*, *Colchester* and other Prisoners imposed by way of sale upon the Adventurers…[100]

Quite apart from what the excerpt reveals about the callous venality of the Interregnum, the last sentence is of particular interest, because it indicates that the government of the time had no moral quandary about selling politically inconvenient families to the Jews, which meant that real human trafficking was going on. It is unfortunate that further information about this practice could not be found. However, based on the facts we know about modern trafficking in woman and girls [known historically as the 'white slave trade'], it is not surprising that it was the Jews who carried out this despicable commerce.

The pamphlet certainly had its impact on public opinion, which in turn contributed to the negotiations with the Jews being officially broken off, because the rise in popular indignation made further negotiations untenable. Apparently, however the negotiations never came to a complete standstill, because in the state papers of John Thurloe, the first secretary to the Council of State and head of intelligence under Oliver Cromwell, there is a letter dated July 29th, 1653, intercepted while Thurloe was in the post of spymaster, according to which discussions on Jewish readmission were still ongoing at that time:

> There hath beene severall motions in the house, that all mariges since 1647 should be null; and that the Jews might bee admitted to trade as well as in Holland; and that all cathedrals should be forthwith pul'd downe; but there is nothing yet done therein, nor in many other things had in consultation, that may be very commodious for the commonwelth.[101]

In 1654, we hear of yet another official petition. On October 16th, 1654, the French ambassador in Holland wrote to his colleague in London that 'a Jew of Amsterdam hath informed me for certain, that the three generals of the fleet have presented a petition to his highness the protector, to obtain, that their nation may be received in England, to draw the commerce hither'.[102] Whether the Jew's statement was correct remains to be seen. In any case, it is interesting that the French ambassador received this communication from a Hebrew in Amsterdam, which shows that the Jews were aware of the plan of the English naval commanders and were therefore undoubtedly involved in this action, if not the actual authors of it.

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100 Walker, Vol. II, pp. 61-2. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from the original source.

101 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. I, p. 387. Translator's know: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

102 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. II, p. 652. Translator's know: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

Oliver Cromwell

The year 1655 would see the greatest efforts of the Jews and their allies to gain admission to England. But before we deal with this history in detail, it is instructive to give the reader a rundown of the two leading men involved insofar as is relevant to the subject under discussion. It was Cromwell who threw his entire public reputation into the balance on behalf of the Jews and who sided with their leader Menasseh ben Israel.

Numerous works on the subject of Cromwell's character have come from both professional and non-professional sources, so we shall refrain from making a similar attempt here. Rather, we shall limit ourselves to examining the question of why Cromwell championed the Jewish cause.

As a Puritan, he was sympathetic towards the Jewish religion and not only felt a connection to it, but also a sense of reverence.[103] Whether this is only out of idealism remains to be seen. He was probably one of those who hoped that the Jews would be won over to Christianity through hospitable treatment and religious freedom, especially since the teachings of the Puritans must have been attractive to Jews.

He was inclined to grant the greatest freedom of religion as long as the religious community in question declared that it would never attempt to interfere in affairs of state. When Quaker patriarch George Fox met Cromwell, the first thing he had to do was sign a pledge 'not to take up a carnal Sword or Weapon against him or the Government, as it then was'. George Fox obliged and Cromwell even later became his friend.[104]

Based on his principle that the state is the highest authority in a country and that everyone can be saved in their own way, it is understandable that Cromwell had nothing against granting rights to the Jews in England.[105] However, even his power as Lord Protector was not great enough to prevail over the will of the people on this issue.

His pro-Jewish attitude was further strengthened by the fact that he had like-minded advisors around him. The latter included the aforementioned Thurloe, who, as his secretary, understandably had extensive influence on the Jewish negotiations, as can be seen from the content of his surviving letters.[106] Cromwell's close associates also included the aforementioned Hugh Peters, his famous army chaplain who was very active in politics, Harry Marten, who was also a member of the Protector's Privy Council,[107] and John Sadler, who is likely to have influenced Cromwell on the Jewish Question through his aforementioned book.

So one should not really be surprised that Cromwell turned out to be the greatest advocate for the Jews of the period, although other considerations may also have guided him towards this stance.

His main aim was to make England great and strong, which in his view required not only military power but also the supremacy of English trade in the world.[108] When Cromwell came to power, this was out of the question because the Dutch Republic was the hegemon of global trade at

103 Graetz, Vol. V, p. 112; Fletcher, p. 230; Godwin, Vol. IV, p. 245.
104 Ranke: *History of England,* Vol. III, p. 151. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
105 Ranke: *History of England*, Vol. III, pp. 151-2. Translator's note: As Ranke put it, Cromwell was tolerant of any religious doctrine so long as it 'put forward no claim to a share of political authority, and neither destroyed nor disturbed the public peace'.
106 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, pp. 308, 321.
107 Graetz, Vol. V, p. 113.
108 Godwin, Vol. IV, p. 245.

that time. England had been financially depleted by its long and bloody civil wars and was unable to achieve the success she desired on her own. It therefore seemed natural to Cromwell to look for foreign support, which he hoped to find among the Jews of the world. As has already been explained, even back then Judaism had a strong global trade network. The Spanish and Portuguese trade as well as the all-important Levant trade lay in Jewish hands, and both the Dutch East and West India Companies were largely controlled by Jews.[109] The global trade in gold and silver bullion was almost completely controlled by the Hebrews, just as they also had major interests in the shipping of all countries.[110]

Cromwell was very well informed on all of these matters through contacts in the small Jewish community in London, as this community itself had important trading relationships with all of the major countries;[111] in other words, even at this time there was hardly a branch of English international trade in which Jewish capital was not involved. However, Cromwell wanted increased Jewish immigration, especially from Holland, as he attributed Amsterdam's prosperity at least in part to the Jews. So if he moved the Jews from there to London, his hope was that levels of English trade would rise, just as levels of Dutch trade would correspondingly fall.

Jewish historians cannot do enough to point out the role of Jews in the rise of England. Wolf comments on this as follows:

> Thus, at the very moment when Spain was on the threshold of a brilliant epoch of colonial expansion – which, if wisely managed, might have given her as wide a dominion as is enjoyed by Great Britain to-day – she had not only depleted herself of a numerous and valuable portion of her industrial population, but had raised up, both within and without her borders, many hundreds of thousands of embittered and insidious foes, who strove against her by every means in their power and who enjoyed peculiar facilities for gratifying their just enmity. And with every step in the extension of Iberian conquests the Marranos extended their counteracting ramifications. The infatuation of the Inquisition assisted them in this by transporting to every new colony shiploads of suspected Jews, who subsequently acted as agents and correspondents of their kinsmen at home and in other countries. In this way the network of Jewish commerce, which already covered North-Western Europe, both littorals of the Mediterranean, and the whole of the Levant, became spread over South America, the East and West Indies, Western Africa, and South-Eastern Africa as far as Hindustan and the Far East. All these colonies were in communication with each other and the early English Jews were in business relations with nearly every one of them.[112]

This overview of the situation, from a renowned Jewish historian, should be sufficient to validate what we have already stated.

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109 Hyamson: *History*, p. 139. Wolf: *Menasseh*, p. xxx.

110 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, pp. 29-30. Translator's note: In *Re-Settlement*, as also serialised in the *Jewish Chronicle* (2/12/1887, p. 8), Wolf states that Carvajal's 'importation of bullion averaged £100,000 a year'. Elsewhere, the 5/2/1666 entry (p. 161) of the *Calendar of State Papers*, Vol. 1655-1666, reveals that, according to Carvajal's petition to Cromwell, he had imported £200,000 of Spanish money and silver bars in the last 2 years.

111 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 73.

112 Wolf: *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 13. Translator's note: Quotation taken verbatim from original source [Wolf: *Essays in Jewish History*, p. 111, see Translator's Bibliography].

Jewish Spies on His Highness's Secret Service

Cromwell wanted to use these Jewish connections not only to boost English trade but also for his foreign policy. Whether this was his own idea or it came from the Hebrews can no longer be determined. Whatever the case, there can be no doubt that Jews the world over placed themselves at Cromwell's service for espionage and rendered him great assistance.

For a long time nothing was known about this activity of Judah, until Lucien Wolf in particular first brought it to light. A review of the relevant literature shows that the Jews' espionage successes contributed significantly to thwarting the actions of Cromwell's numerous enemies on the Continent. The future King Charles II assembled his supporters and allies (who came from all over Europe) into the region of Flanders with the view to raising an army of men who would cross over to England and fight Cromwell in his own country. Cromwell faced almost insurmountable difficulties, especially since the Spanish support of Charles Stuart was quite strong. However, the precise information provided by Jewish espionage enabled Cromwell to nip the entire Royalist expedition plan in the bud by unexpectedly seizing his opponents' fleet at Ostend.[113]

Unsurprisingly, the head of this Jewish spy ring was in London: it was Carvajal, whom we have already discussed. In the collection of contemporary letters known as the Thurloe Papers, there is a letter written in the time and place of 'Vlyssingen, December 20/30, 1656', and addressed to 'Mr. Ferdinando Carnevall, Merchant at London', which only briefly acknowledges the late receipt of the addressee's letter 'with the inclosed' and is signed with the name 'Jacub Goltburgh'.[114] From the title of the collection, which dates from 1752, it is clear that the name was only a pseudonym and the actual letter writer was a certain J. Butler [seen elsewhere in the letter collection as John Butler or Jack Butler]. Further research of this name reveals a number of spy letters from this individual, which, however, were not expressly addressed to 'Carnevall'.

The question then arises as to who Carnevall was and whether the letters went to him or to Thurloe. Although a distinguished historian, William Dunn Macray, argues that the name 'Carnevall' is a pseudonym,[115] we have no hesitation in agreeing with Wolf that the name Carnevall can only refer to the Jew Antonio Fernandez Carvajal.[116] It is true that a man like Thurloe would not be able to use the name of this well-known Jew as a pseudonym. Because if the letters, the contents of which were so important for the English government that access by unauthorised persons had to be avoided at all costs, were addressed in the manner indicated, then despite the slight difference in the name they had to have reached Carvajal, who incidentally was, as can be seen from official documents etc., often referred to as Caravajal.[117]

In another letter collection there are further intelligence communications from Flanders, which date from February to May 1657 and are also likely to have come from Butler.[118] However,

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113 Wolf: *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 13.

114 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, p. 722. Translator's note: All quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source. It should be noted, however, that although the name of 'J. Butler' appears to be later metadata, the name of 'Carnevall' is not, as it appears on the envelope in French as 'Monsieur FERDINANDO CARNEVALL, Marchand, auprès de la bourse. A Londres.' The address given ('next to the stock exchange. London.') would surely strengthen supposition that this is Carvajal. From *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 97.

115 Macray, Vol. III, pp. 242, 256 ff.

116 Wolf: *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 6.

117 See, for example, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*, Vol. [Year] 1654 p. 28; Vol. 1655/6, pp. 60, 161.

118 Macray, Vol. III, pp. 242, 256, 262 ff., 276, 283, 287.

this time they are signed neither ‘Jacub Goltburgh’ nor ‘J. Butler’, but instead ‘Jean Somer’. Wolf saw the first two letters in the original, compared the handwritings of J. Butler and Jean Somer, and found them to be completely consistent, which is good evidence for the identity of the writer.

It is also recorded in the documents that on March 30th, 1655, a passport to Flanders was issued for one of Carvajal’s employees named Alfonso de Fonseca.[119] It cannot be determined whether this trip is connected to Carvajal's espionage activity, but based on what has been stated above, it should not be ruled out.

The contents of the letters in question show that the facts reported by the spy were extremely important to Cromwell.

Butler – as we shall henceforth call the spy – was, judging by the volume of communications, unable to do all of the required work on his own. Rather, he must have had various accomplices, while he himself was probably the head of Cromwell's spy ring in Holland and Flanders. In one of his letters he explicitly refers to other people who are in his service.[120] We also find that he gives very precise information about Charles Stuart's current troop strength. However, information about the port which was to be the assembly point for the ships which would transport the invading troops to England was of particular importance, and Butler assured the unnamed addressee that he would give news of the final assembly point and number of ships well in advance.[121] It is therefore quite certain that it was Butler's communications that enabled Cromwell to successfully attack the fleet and transport ships anchored in Ostend in good time, thereby preventing the Royalists from landing in England. In addition, Butler continuously provided precise information about the equipment and armament of the troops. He even knew and communicated the number of newly purchased weapons.[122] With astonishing expertise he reported on even the most intimate affairs taking place at the court of Charles Stuart. Every person of importance was apparently monitored by his secret service. One learns about the comings and goings of these people from his letters.[123] His spies even managed to identify the individual donations that went to Charles Stuart, including the names of the donors in question.[124]

The secret service's connections went so far that it was even possible to give a precise description of the spies sent to England by Charles Stuart.[125] It would certainly not have been difficult to have the people in question monitored or rendered harmless.

However, John Butler would have earned a particularly special merit if he did indeed manage to provide Cromwell with the anticipated concrete information about the alliance treaty between Spain and Charles Stuart. The written treaty had been kept extremely secret and only two of Charles Stuart's most loyal advisors, Ormond and Sir Edward Hyde, knew the details of it, the rest of his followers being kept in the dark. Butler nevertheless undertook to procure a copy of the contract from a courtier, who had promised to get it for twenty pounds.[126] Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine from the letters whether the intelligencer was successful. But we can see from subsequent letters that Butler was apparently always very well informed in advance about the Spaniards' individual plans of support. For example, regarding Charles Stuart’s ability to finance the

119 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. [Year] 1655, p. 580.
120 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, p. 588.
121 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, pp. 645, 709; Macray, Vol. III, pp. 265, 276, 283.
122 Macray, Vol. III, p. 256.
123 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, pp. 645, 665.
124 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, pp. 645, 709.
125 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, p. 645.
126 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, p. 665.

expedition, Butler was able to report that the Spanish king was relying on the imminent arrival of twelve treasure galleons from the Indies which were to be met by ‘twelve good ships’ from Spain. Holland would also provide Charles with two ‘men of war’ from its fleet to patrol the Spanish coast, in order to warn Spain’s returning ‘plate fleet’ of any English navy ships in the area.[127]

Cromwell the man may also have been personally indebted to his secret service. In one of Butler’s letters, we find a warning of an assassination plot against the Lord Protector:

> A Dutchman passed lately into England who is suspected of intending some attempt against the Protector; he served the King of Spain for a long time, and is now a great favourite with Charles Stuart, and resides at Sluya; he is called Colonel Pinleter, a very bold fellow, of a most dissolute and vicious life; if any stranger frequent Whitehall, take heed to him.[128]

Unfortunately, no further details are known of this matter. We must assume that they were able to render Pinleter harmless because of the warning.

There can be no doubt that Cromwell’s successes were in no small part thanks to the services of his Jewish spies. At the same time, Carvajal's links to this intelligence network also give us an explanation as to why he could always count on the government's support, regardless of his crimes.

In addition to Carvajal, another rich Jew named Manuel Martinez Dormido (*né* David Abarbanel Dormido) may have made his connections available for espionage purposes. When we later come to discuss Dormido in another context, readers will fully understand why he was chosen for this purpose. Part of his correspondence with his agents in Holland is also preserved in the Thurloe collection, and Wolf rightly argues that these communications represent only a meagre remnant of all those that must have been sent.[129] There are two other people involved, undoubtedly Jews: David Nasy [Nasi] and Manoel Grasian. The former wrote to Dormido on September 10th, 1655, to inform him that 28 Spanish ships with 1010 pieces of artillery had set sail. The crew consisted of some 11,000 men. Another 32 ships of the Spanish fleet would soon join the first-mentioned force. The intention was to join forces in pursuit of the English fleet. ‘God grant,’ Nasy concludes, ‘that they never enjoy their expectations, those wicked papists; and that his highness may remain in his arms victorious, and enjoy great success for the good of his people.’[130] Grasian's letter contains similar messages about the strength and movements of the Spanish fleet and concludes: ‘God prosper his highness’s forces, and of that commonwealth, which doth favour our nation.’[131]

The closing words of both letters are interesting in that they clearly show the attitude of the Jews towards Spain and England: the former is treated with total contempt, the latter with Jewish unctuousness.

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127 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. V, p. 709; Macray, Vol. III, p. 242. Translator’s note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source [Thurloe].

128 Macray, Vol. III, p. 262. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

129 Wolf: *Cromwell’s Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 10.

130 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. III, p. 750. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

131 *State Papers of John Thurloe,* Vol III, pp. 750-1. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

Just as, even back then, this secret Jewish network was of great service to Cromwell, so international Jewry is still working for England in the same way today. Hilaire Belloc, the unflinchingly observant writer, writes of the present time as follows:

> The Jewish news agencies of the nineteenth century favoured England in all her policy, political as well as commercial; they opposed those of her rivals and especially those of her enemies. The Jewish knowledge of the East was at the service of England. His international penetration of the European governments was also at her service – so was his secret information. With the consolidation of the Indian Empire after the Mutiny the Jews were again an ally from their traditional hatred of the Russian people, which hatred has led them in our time to wreak so awful a vengeance upon their former oppressors. The Jew might also be called a British agent upon the Continent of Europe, and still more in the Near and Far East, where the economic power of England extended even more rapidly than her political power.[132]

Carvajal's aforementioned employee, de Fonseca, is Dormido's brother.[133] This further connection with Dormido, one of Cromwell's main spies, strengthens the previously expressed view that Carvajal was also a part of the espionage network.

Dormido's services to Cromwell must have been important, considering the favour shown to him by the latter. When the Portuguese recaptured Pernambuco from the Dutch, they confiscated sizeable assets from Dormido, who asked Cromwell to appeal to the king of Portugal on his behalf. Cromwell forwarded the request to the Council of State for action on November 8th, 1654.[134] However, the Council of State 'saw no cause to make any order', let alone to appeal to the king of Portugal, on the grounds that Dormido was not a British but a Dutch citizen.[135] Cromwell then took matters into his own hands and defended Dormido in a private letter to the King of Portugal. As a special favour, he requested that the assets in Pernambuco be returned to Dormido.[136] This incident should conclusively demonstrate Cromwell's stance towards the Jews.

The information set out so far about the Jews' spy service is clearly proven through the historical documentation, but there is also the assumption that the Jews in general worked as spies for Cromwell. The circumstances presented do not plausibly provide for a conclusion that such activity was limited to a few specific Jews. This assumption is confirmed by the historical accounts of two reliable historians. One of them is Bishop Burnet (1643-1715), who wrote the highly acclaimed *History of His Own Time*. Given that at one point the work highlights Cromwell's relations with the Jews, it would be remiss of us not to reproduce the relevant commentary:

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132 Belloc: *The Jews*, p. 222-3.
133 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 70.
134 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1654, p. 393.
135 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1654, p. 407. Translator's note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source. Aldag likely got the above reason for the Committee's refusal from Wolf, who gives it in his *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers* [p. 106 of *Essays*], because the entry referenced here (which is also Wolf's source) makes no mention of the petitioner's Dutch citizenship, but does describe him in the following way: 'Emanuel Martyns Dorindo, *alias* David Abrabanell, a Hebrew', which suggests that the Committee, by presenting his birth name in this way, was keen to strip his identity of any crypsis lent to him by his alias, and refused to act based on the fact that Dormido was indeed a foreign national, but one of the Hebrew nation, rather than the Dutch Republic.
136 Wolf: *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligencers*, p. 11.

> I go next to give an account of Cromwell's transactions with relation to foreign affairs. He laid it down for a maxim, to spare no cost or charge in order to procure him intelligence. When he understood what dealers the Jews were every where in that trade that depends on news, the advancing money upon high or low interests in proportion to the risk they run, or the gain to be made as the times might turn, and in the buying and selling of the actions of money so advanced, he, more upon that account than in compliance with the principle of toleration, brought a company of them over to England, and gave them leave to build a synagogue. All the while that he was negotiating this, they were sure and good spies for him, especially with relation to Spain and Portugal. The Earl of Orrery told me, he was once walking with him in one of the galleries of Whitehall, and a man almost in rags came in view: he presently dismissed Lord Orrery, and carried that man into his closet; who brought him an account of a great sum of money that the Spaniards were sending over to pay their army in Flanders, but in a Dutch man of war: and he told him the places of the ship in which the money was lodged.

Through this communication, as Lord Orrery reported to him, the Dutch warship was indeed captured near Dover and the great sum of money taken off board under pressure from the English warships. 'Next time that Cromwell saw Orrery,' Burnet concludes, 'he told him he had his intelligence from that contemptible man he saw him go to some days before.'[137]

With this story in mind, we have better insight into an entry in the Council of State minutes of September 7th, 1652, which reads as follows: 'The petition of Antonio Ferdinando Carvajal, declaring that there is some silver to be brought in a Hamburg ship to Ostend, on account of Spanish merchants, was this day read, and the manifestation therein expressed there taken notice of.'[138] This was apparently a message from Carvajal's secret service, and English warships probably ensured that the silver did not reach Flanders. Furthermore, Carvajal's knowledge of this transport is not surprising since, as the largest merchant in this branch of trade, he would be informed by his fellow 'Spanish' peers and business friends. We find further authentic confirmation of our supposition in the pages of the so-called *Diary of Thomas Burton, esq.,* when the parliamentarian conveys the essence of Cromwell's stance towards the Jews in the following comment:

> The Jews, also, those able and general intelligencers, whose intercourse with the Continent, Cromwell had before turned to a profitable account, he now conciliated by a seasonable benefaction to their principal agent resident in England.[139]

The nature of the 'seasonable benefaction' that was shown to the Jews can no longer be determined. Wolf is of the opinion that this 'benefaction' consisted of Cromwell giving the Jews

137 Burnet, Vol. I, p. 122. Translator's note: Quotations reproduced verbatim from original source.

138 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1651/52, p. 395. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

139 Burton, Vol. II, p. 471. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. It would appear that this 'seasonable benefaction to their principle agent resident in England' was not, as might be supposed, Carvajal's Letters Patent of Denization, given that Carvajal was denizenised in 1655, and this benefaction was made in 1658 according to Burton's own text (February 4th, 1658, according to Wolf in *The First English Jew*, p. 22), or in 1657 (as more improbably conjectured in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, § CROMWELL, OLIVER).

assurances of settlement in England in front of an assembled Parliament. We do not consider this view to be correct, but at least one can see from Burton's report that the espionage activities of the Jews were certainly one of the main reasons why Cromwell favoured them. For the sake of completeness, it should be made clear that Carvajal was the ‘principal agent’ of the Jews; elsewhere he is called ‘the great Jew’ by his contemporary Thomas Violet, from whom we will hear later.[140] The epithets may differ, but in essence they mean the same thing.

140 Violet: *A Petition against the Jewes*, p. 7. Translator’s note: We can be sure that ‘the great Jew’ is the original English form of the epithet for Carvajal, as it is also quoted in the opening sentence Wolf’s *The First English Jew.*

Cromwell's General Support from the Jews

Aside from the aforementioned reasons for Cromwell's support of the Jews, it should also be considered that Cromwell was likely dependent on Jewish capital, although it must be admitted that research has not yet yielded conclusive proof of this. According to the Jewish historian Lucien Wolf, there is little doubt that the Jews made money available to Cromwell, or, to be more specific, the parliamentary government. He explains that around 1643, foreign Jews from Amsterdam were found in London, who were probably attracted by the financial difficulties of the government at the time.[141]

Elsewhere Wolf expresses his opinion more bluntly, citing a letter according to which the Jews offered the Republicans 'considerable sums of money to carry on their designs'.[142]

Other writers, who were opponents of Cromwell, also claim that he received donations from the Jews.[143] There is therefore a high probability that the Jews provided Cromwell with strong financial support. It is also quite possible that they were willing to pay Cromwell and the Republican government significant sums provided they were given certain assurances about being granted permission to trade freely in England. Since the Jews did not receive this legal assurance from Parliament under Cromwell, the offer of money may have remained.[144]

The fact that Cromwell always attached considerable importance to financial support from the Jews is evident from the fact that after the collapse of the so-called Whitehall Conference, which shall be discussed in a later chapter, he made further action on the matter dependent on the Jews paying the enormous sum of money he demanded.[145] Whatever was the case, based on the sparse extant documentary evidence we have no doubt that large payments were made.

A lot of money must have flowed indirectly into England through the immigration of Jews. We have already described the vast scale of Jewish business. One example is that of the immigrant Jew Diego Rodrigues Marques, who, with the help of relatives, brought £15,000 capital plus merchandise to London when he emigrated from Lisbon, as can be seen from his public will. One can only speculate from this fact how he must have increased his wealth, given that, in 1678, his will mentioned that gold and silver worth 1,000,545 milréis was on its way from Portugal to England.[146]

But the Jews also served Cromwell in another way. Encouraged and assisted by their relatives and business contacts all over the world, they were already a people who were uniquely familiar with many countries through their wanderings and travels. At the same time, during their sojourns they were not only informed about the general character of the country in question, but also discussed the business opportunities and advantages to be gained. The aforementioned Jew Simon de Caceres, for example, had lived in South America for a long time and therefore knew the

141 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 4.
142 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xix. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
143 Romaine, p. 5; Prynne: *Narrative*, p. 49.
144 Fletcher, p. 231; Henriques: *Return*, p. 67.
145 *Nicholas Papers*, Vol. III, p. 255.
146 Probate Office Records 1678 (Reeve Fol. 113). Translator's note: Aldag undoubtedly got his information indirectly from *Cromwell's Jewish Intelligences* (pp. 112-3), rather than the one cited, which is cited by Wolf. Wolf (ibid) also states that 'the first few Jewish settlers brought with them no less a sum than £1,500,000 in ready money'.

conditions there.[147] We know that he gave Cromwell information about foreign countries and even gave him precisely formulated suggestions, which the Lord Protector mostly followed.

In 1655, Jamaica was conquered by England.[148] Caceres presented Cromwell with a memorandum titled: 'A note of what things are wanting in Jamaica.'[149] From the contents it appears that he developed these proposals immediately after his return from Jamaica. More than anything else, he believed that an expansion of the port was absolutely necessary, which would require stones and other building materials. He gave meticulous details for the fortification of the island, down to listing and quantifying the required staff, equipment and tools, as well as suggesting the special supplies for the troops that should be sent there as quickly as possible.

Cromwell appears to have been persuaded by these statements, for in one of his letters written to Major General Richard Fortescue in Jamaica in 1655, we find instructions along the lines of Caceres' suggestions.[150]

Along with this memorandum, Caceres made further proposals for the conquest of Chile. He furnishes Cromwell with a detailed description of this country and the place where the expeditionary force would land. In his opinion, four frigates and four transport ships with a thousand soldiers would be enough to conquer Chile. He thinks an island he calls Mocha is particularly suitable as a base, especially since the English could buy food there 'at easy rates' from the Indians. In addition, the latter, as mortal enemies of the Spanish, would be friendly to the English. Caceres does not forget to point out to Cromwell the six main advantages that would come from conquering Chile. More gold would be found there than in Peru, and the country was rich in fruit, livestock and fish. In addition, the most warlike Indians lived there, who were inspired by an implacable hatred against the Spanish. Furthermore, Chile was a good base of operations for English frigates to 'scowre the whole south sea' in search of Spanish treasure ships making their way back from the Philippines and South America to the metropole. Finally, this move would also gradually push back the Spanish, as they would find themselves attacked on both sides of the Americas. Caceres' subsequent comments were evidently made in a bid to secure the best possible positions in the expedition for himself and his ethnic kin. First of all, sailors in Holland (clearly Jews) who had already accompanied another expedition to Chile and were therefore familiar with the area should be recruited for this company. Caceres does not state them to be Jews, but the implication is clear. In addition, he also suggests that he 'shall engage some young men of my owne nation, and promise to conduct them in my owne person, by the Lord's permission; and if it seeme good unto his highnes, negotiating all this with the greatest secrecy'. Were Cromwell to worry about this proportion of non-English on the expedition, Caceres reassures him with the final suggestion: 'That the bulk and body of the officers and company bee English; and that those of my nation, or others that shall be admitted, shall goe all upon an English account, and as Englishmen, and for his highnes service only.' Not shy to put himself forward, Caceres also confidently volunteered himself to 'goe in person eyther as chief in the action, or next unto him, that is chiefe therein, and upon equitable and honourable termes, as his highnes shall judge meet.'[151]

147 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 5.
148 Green, Vol. III, p. 294.
149 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, pp. 61-2. Translator's note: This is the title of the document as it appears in the original source. Note that the petitioner's name is rendered 'Simon de Casseres' in the original document.
150 Carlyle: *Letters*, Vol. II, p. 389-90.
151 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, pp. 62-3. Translator's note: All quoted elements reproduced verbatim from the original source.

One can see that Caceres did not forget himself in his suggestions and was concerned about his own advantage. Apparently Cromwell did not undertake this expedition.

Wolf discovered another plan by Caceres in the Rawlinson Collection, which relates to the Navigation Act.[152] As is well known, this plan intended to take trade away from the Dutch and increase the volume of English shipping. Caceres showed Cromwell in detail that when it came to the shipping of commodities, especially sugar in the West Indies, there was still a lot wrong with the English share in the trade. The Dutch, the Hamburgers and the French still had far too large a share in the trade of this English colony. He then went on to show how this situation, which was unfavourable for England, could be remedied. It was particularly important to be wary of the tricks of the Dutch, Hamburgers and other foreigners, otherwise all efforts made in this regard would prove to be useless from the start. He, Caceres, would be the right man as commissioner to carry out the measures he had designed, since he knew all the foreigners' tricks, and would only take for himself a modest 20% of all revenue resulting from the scheme. These statements by Caceres are all the more significant because it shows that the basic idea behind the Navigation Act apparently came from a Jew. The evidence abounds to show the extent to which Cromwell was supported by the Hebrews. He was on the lips of all the world's Jews, who expected great deeds from him for their salvation.

Around 1654 or 1655 – the exact year is not certain[153] – a delegation of Jews from Asia Minor came to England under the leadership of one of their rabbis. Cromwell granted them an interview during which they explained to him that they wanted to purchase some Hebrew books and manuscripts belonging to the University of Cambridge. Cromwell was not opposed to this plan. But they first asked for permission to take a look at the library, which Cromwell granted them. The Jews went to Cambridge, but after some time they were found in Huntingdon, Cromwell's birthplace, where, to the astonishment of the residents, they were researching his family tree. It soon became clear that they had a specific purpose in mind: they wanted to find out whether his lineage confirmed their view that Cromwell was a Jew and the Messiah they had long been promised.[154] The English public received this news with a mixture of anger and derision. Finally, Cromwell himself came to hear of it, and in order to avoid the indignation or ridicule of the crowd, he was forced to expel the Jewish delegation from the country.[155]

According to Picciotto, some writers are in doubt as to whether this incident actually happened. In our opinion it is very possible, both in general and for a special reason that has so far been overlooked by other researchers.

Through the writing of an Englishman of the time we have been informed that a large gathering of the world's Jews took place on December 12th, 1650 near Budapest, a gathering which was attended by some 300 representatives of the various Jewish colonies.[156] The Englishman, Samuel Brett, a ship's captain and surgeon, somehow had access to the event and attended all the meetings. Mainly there was heated discussion about whether or not the Messiah had yet appeared. The Jews argued for days without achieving a consensus of opinion, with the vast majority believing that he had not yet come. In any case, it is certain that the expected Messiah would have

152 Wolf: *American Elements*, p. 99.
153 Tovey: p. 275.
154 As is well-known, the Jews do not recognise Jesus Christ as the Messiah.
155 Picciotto, p. 29; Romaine: *Answer to a Pamphlet*, p. 46-47; Blunt, p. 71; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xli; Jesse, Vol. III, p. 88.
156 Brett: In *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. I (1808 edition), 379 ff.

great earthly power. The decision was made to convene a similar assembly in Syria in 1653 to settle the issue, as well as other matters.[157]

We do not know whether this Syrian assembly took place, but there is nothing to say against it, and it is quite likely that once again no agreement was reached on this issue. Given the favour shown to the Jews by Cromwell as well as his great earthly power, it is understandable why some might have been inclined to consider him the Messiah. The only obstacle appears to have been the uncertainty of his parentage, and it is reasonable to assume that in 1653 a delegation was appointed to investigate in England. In 1654 or 1655 a delegation from Asia Minor did actually appear, as is unanimously reported, so that there can be no doubt about that aforementioned event.

Apart from these considerations, however, what is of general interest here is the fact that even back then the world's Jews came together to discuss common matters. This is yet more solid proof for the thesis, which the Jews categorically reject, that there is a common front among them.

157 Brett: In *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. I (1808 edition), p. 385. Translator’s note: Scholarly silence over this tract may come from the fact that Brett’s testimony is generally disbelieved, and, certainly, the facticity of the event was denied by Menasseh ben Israel.

Menasseh ben Israel

Now that we have received a general overview of Cromwell's stance towards the Jews and vice versa, it should not be so difficult to understand the events that followed in 1654 and 1655.

If on the English side Cromwell was the zealous promoter of the Jewish cause, the Jewish leader of the cause was a rabbi in Amsterdam, Menasseh ben Israel. We will have to spend some time with him, not only because of his collaboration with Cromwell, but because he was one of the first Jews to act not for a specific group of Jews, but as a leader for international Jewry. A recurring objection to one of our reasons for fighting organised Jewry is the argument that the Jewish conscious, unified will for world domination (which we believe is an objective reality), does not exist or at least cannot be convincingly established.

It must be admitted that not all attempts to provide evidence on this point have been successful. However, this is usually less due to the material itself than the way it is presented. We must get used to providing the world with unassailable evidence on this matter, which we can and must achieve by citing sources and, wherever possible, by reference to Jewish literature and historical research. Nothing helps the Jews and their supporters around the world more than departing from these principles.

It is particularly difficult to make well-founded statements about the conscious striving of the Jews towards world domination. Jewish archives like those of the House of Rothschild are, and will probably always remain, closed to the public. Furthermore, the driving forces in Judaism will naturally avoid putting their goals on paper as much as possible. Most of the time there is only circumstantial evidence to rely on, which cannot convince those who are particularly skeptical. As a result, we must be grateful for whatever documentation or other impeccable evidence that is found to justify our claim and, most importantly, to convince doubters. Menasseh ben Israel and his mission to Oliver Cromwell may be one of those cases in which there is enough compelling material to prove that the Jews of the world had a common purpose and a unified leadership.

First, let us briefly familiarise ourselves with the life of Menasseh ben Israel in order to understand why he was destined and suited for this great task.

Ben Israel was born in 1604 and there is some doubt as to where he was born. However, Lisbon can almost certainly be considered his birthplace.[158] His father was one of the aforementioned Marranos who lived in Portugal. One day he was discovered to be a secret Jew and was unable to escape the torture of the Inquisition. His assets were confiscated and the family was only too happy to flee Portugal at the first opportunity. Like many other Marranos, they took refuge in Amsterdam, the burgeoning new centre for Jewry worldwide. When Menasseh arrived in Amsterdam, his father was a broken man who found it difficult to bear his poverty. There can be no doubt that Menasseh ben Israel was already old enough to have experienced some of the Inquisition’s actions against the Jews and to have absorbed them into his young mind. He would certainly have had a lasting memory of the trauma, not least because his parents would have constantly refreshed his memory with their stories. In addition, there was a continuous flow of new Marrano arrivals in Amsterdam, who reported on the harsh measures taken by the Catholics of the Iberian Peninsula against the Jews. The Jewish character is already typically inclined towards vengeance for any perceived injustice done to him. The fact that Menasseh was no exception to this

158 E. Adler: *Letter*, p. 174; Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 27; Picciotto, p. 25.

general type can be seen, for example, from a fragment of one of his letters dated 1647, in which one can sense the intensity of his rancour towards the English for their actions against his ethnic kinsmen 350 years before.

> *Senhor,*
>
> *No puedo enar*: that is, Sir, I cannot express the joy that I have, when I read your letters, full of desires to see your country prosperous, which is heavily afflicted with civil wars, without doubt, by the just judgment of God. And it should not be in vain to attribute it to the punishment of your predecessors' faults, committed against ours; when ours, being deprived of their liberty under deceitfulness, so many men were slain, only because they kept close unto the tents of Moses, their legislator, &c.[159]

How much more must he have sworn revenge on the Spaniards and Portuguese who, during his own lifetime, had persecuted not only his fellow Jews but his own family. Since Cromwell was Spain's greatest adversary, one can imagine that Menasseh took particular pleasure in cooperating with him, as he could hope, on getting permission for mass Jewish immigration to England, to be able to build up the same dominant position in the new land that his people had once enjoyed in Spain. This would then put them in a position to be able to strike at their mortal enemies on the Iberian Peninsula.

When still a child, Menasseh ben Israel was entrusted to the renowned Rabbi Issac Uziel for his education. Under Uziel's tutelage, Menasseh was able to give his first synagogue sermon at the age of 15. When his master died in 1622, Menasseh was appointed his successor despite being very young for the position.[160] He was soon known in every Jewish colony in the world as one of the best rabbis. The Jews came from every country on earth to debate with him on all matters Jewish and to hear his opinions. This explains why he soon became a famous name in international Jewish circles and was acquainted with all of the world's leading Jews. The fact that he wrote extensively also contributed to the spread of his name, with works that were mainly of a philosophical and historical nature. Ultimately, however, his activity was not limited to Jewish circles; thanks to his knowledge of ten languages, he also came into contact with representatives of other nations.[161]

He married shortly after his appointment as rabbi, and the marriage resulted in two sons. To supplement his meagre rabbinical earnings, he opened a printing shop. Apparently this venture was not accompanied by great material success, as we soon hear of renewed financial difficulties. He decided to emigrate to Pernambuco, where the Jews had acquired enormous wealth after the Dutch conquest of Brazil. He had already finalised his affairs in Holland and was about to leave when two very rich Jews who had emigrated from Spain, the brothers Abraham and Isaac Pereira, persuaded him to stay. They wanted to found a Jewish school in Amsterdam and employ him as a teacher. Since the salary was sufficient for Menasseh's needs, he accepted the offer.[162]

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159 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 ed.). p. 623. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. As there is no verb 'enar' in Spanish, one can only imagine that it is a word specific to the Judeo-Spanish dialect [Ladino] that Menasseh undoubtedly spoke, and that the subsequent English written is indeed a translation of the Ladino, which would appear to mean that he couldn't contain his joy (perhaps better, *schadenfreude*).

160 Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 27. Translator's note: Wolf (Menasseh, p. xxii) states that he was ordained a rabbi at eighteen.

161 Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 28 ff.; Hyamson: *History*, p. 145.

162 Dr. Adler: *Homage*, pp. 32-3; Hyamson: *History*, pp. 147-8.

It is no longer possible to know for certain why and through whom Menasseh ben Israel was chosen for his task in England. Some Jewish writers believe that the hospitable attitude of the Puritans as already described, combined with the literature of the time, encouraged Menasseh to begin negotiations with England.[163] Dr. Adler and Heinrich Graetz even claim that the final impetus for him to take action was the aforementioned pro-Jewish pamphlet written by Edward Nicholas in 1648. Given that, as per previous arguments, this pamphlet may have been produced by Menasseh himself, writing under a pseudonym, Adler and Graetz's supposition may not be correct.

Whatever the case, in our opinion Menasseh ben Israel must have been prompted to take his fated path due to the concerns of the Jews at that time as well as the prevailing millenarian ideas that had infused the Puritan zeitgeist. Then as now, the Jewish Question had become a burning issue in many countries.

Forced by the unwelcome developments on the Iberian Peninsula which are well documented in history, thousands of Jews flooded the world. A very significant number of these refugees amassed fabulous wealth in Brazil under the protection of the Dutch. This changed when the Portuguese drove out the Dutch in the middle of the 17th century and re-took possession of their former colony. The Jews had to flee alongside the Dutch. Some of them turned to the English and Dutch colonies of the Americas, but most of them flowed back to the Jewish global headquarters of Amsterdam. Five thousand Jews emigrated from a single city in Brazil alone.[164] One can glean from this example that numbers on the move generally must have been considerable. Most of the time they could only save their lives. Quite apart from the fact that the all-important trade with South America had ended, which of course had negative repercussions on the prosperity of the Jewish merchants in Amsterdam, considerable funds were also needed to be raised for the maintenance of these newly arrived hungry brethren. A remedy had to be found as quickly as possible, which could best be achieved by finding new countries for the homeless Jews: a particularly difficult task. Germany had just come out of the Thirty Years' War, which meant that trade there was completely destroyed. This led to hordes of Jews streaming out of Germany into Amsterdam, intensifying the difficulties of the colony there. Whole swarms also arrived there from Poland, where one of the greatest persecutions of Jews had broken out [known today as the Chmielnicki Massacres]. Hundreds, even thousands, had migrated westwards. An interesting document has been preserved from which it is clear that Menasseh ben Israel was also consciously pushed towards his mission by the critical situation described. In a letter dated December 31st, 1655, the Dutch ambassador to the Commonwealth of England, Willem Nieupoort, informed an unnamed lord that Menasseh ben Israel would work primarily for the persecuted Spanish and Portuguese Jews: 'Manasseh Ben Israel hath been to see me; and he did assure me, that he doth not desire any thing for the Jews in Holland, but only for such as sit in the inquisition in Spain and Portugal.'[165] The same thing is seen in a letter from the aforementioned Dormido to Cromwell dated November 3rd, 1654, in which he first complains about the general situation of the Jews in Spain and Portugal, and then gives a detailed description of the conditions that are so unpleasant for them. Finally, he asks Cromwell to take the beleaguered Hebrews into England.[166] This latter source is particularly valuable to our thesis in that

163 Graetz, Vol. V, p. 104 ff.; Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 33; Hyamson: *History*, p. 142 ff.

164 Wolf: *American Elements*, p. 80. Translator's note: The controversial word choice of 'colonies', 'hordes', 'swarms' (etc.) have been translated literally from the original in order to be true to the writer's intentions, words perhaps used to reflect the attitudes of those on the ground suffering the effects of uncontrolled mass immigration, which included those Jews themselves who were long-established, and forced to donate alms for the new arrivals.

165 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, p. 333. Translator's note: Quoted verbatim from original source.

166 See Wolf: *American Elements*, Appendix, Document II (pp. 88-9) for a reproduction of this petition.

it represents a formal petition from Dormido, and shows that he himself was a precursor to Menasseh ben Israel's efforts in England.

Another general pressing reason that concerned the world's Jews was given for their admission into England:

After their expulsion from Brazil, the Jews lost all trade connections with the then more important southern half of the continent. Some of them made their way from Brazil to neighbouring Surinam, at that time an English colony, while others went to New York, Jamaica, Barbados, or other English colonies.[167] There they were tolerated in tacit silence, and the Jews in Europe soon established new relationships with their fellow Jews. Everything seemed to be going well. History has shown that the Jews have a special ability to quickly settle in other countries and start new business ventures with their ethnic brethren and old business friends. So it was hoped in Jewish circles that they would soon be able to get over the loss of South America, as there was the promise of new business with the West Indies and North America on the horizon.

The announcement of the English Navigation Act of October 9th, 1651 had a huge impact on events.[168] This law stipulated that non-European imports into England or her colonies could only take place on English ships, and that imports from Europe of the most important goods, as well as all goods from Turkey and Russia, could only take place on English ships or on ships from the country of origin. The main purpose was to destroy Dutch trade for the next few years and thus increase English shipping. History has shown what a resounding success these regulations were for England: Dutch trade and shipping were mainly in the hands of the Jews, and they were therefore severely affected. In such cases, however, the Jews usually inveigle a war on their own behalf from their host country, which they financially support to the utmost for this purpose. Just such an event happened during this period of history. Holland became embroiled in a war with England. Its weapons were unsuccessful and, among other things, it was forced to recognise the Navigation Act in the peace treaty. This meant that Holland's power and especially its supremacy on the seas was shattered. Judah recognised that England had the future to itself and would soon dominate the world's trade and shipping, and that the Dutch nation was too small to assert itself in the long term as a serious competitor to the emerging England. As a result, everything had to be done to gain a foothold in England and not lose their lines of communication. With the rise of England, the Jews had to grab the chance to regain their old dominant position in the world, as they had so recently enjoyed in Spain and Holland.

But it was not just the decline in Holland's geopolitical position that caused the Hebrews to change sides. Rather, their entire global trade strategy was once again up in the air, because the Jews in England's West Indian and North American colonies could no longer trade with their ethnic brothers in Amsterdam. So they faced the loss of this trading zone again. As a result, it became clear to the Jews that global traffic had to be diverted from Amsterdam to London in order not to run the risk of losing the entire trade of the new world, which they had come to view as almost their own ethnic monopoly. The only way to counteract this was to transfer their main interests to London.

And there was another reason for world Jewry to gain access to England.

In all of his writings, Menasseh ben Israel was profoundly affected by the prophecy given in the book of Daniel, according to which the deliverance of the Jews would come when they were scattered throughout the world. This prophecy had become a motivating factor for Menasseh's

167 Wolf: *American Elements*, p. 80 ff.
168 Lingard, Vol. VIII, p. 374.

efforts.[169] However, according to other prophecies, the redemption of the Jews was contingent on the dawn of the thousand-year kingdom, the coming of the Messiah and the return of the Jews to the Promised Land, and Menasseh ben Israel and his followers believed in this prophecy unshakably.[170] However, the explicit prerequisite for the prophecy to unfold was that the Jews would first have to be scattered all over the world. So what form did this have to take?

It would go too far within the scope of this work to cover this topic exhaustively, which is why we shall only deal with it to the extent needed to understand the motivations and actions of Menasseh ben Israel.

Scholars have been concerned with the problem of the so-called *Ten Lost Tribes of Israel* since at least the Middle Ages, with writings on this question having been published as early as the 13th, 14th and 16th centuries. In Asia Minor and the Caspian Sea, the Tartars were also said to be the descendants of Israel's Lost Tribes.[171]

Towards the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century it became fashionable to discuss this issue. At first it was mainly Spanish clergy who put forward the completely new theory that the American Indians were connected to the *Ten Lost Tribes*. Some claimed that they were direct descendants of the Israelites, while others saw the devil as their real forefather, who had endowed the Indians with Jewish customs and behaviour. One of the most illustrative books of the first theory is Gregorio Garcia's *Origen de los Indios*. In his view, the *Ten Lost Tribes* migrated throughout Asia to the shores of the Bering Strait and from there to America. Using a long list, he attempted to demonstrate the similarities between Indians and Hebrews.[172] Writings for and against this theory appeared throughout the civilised world at that time. In England, it was not until 1650 that this theory was mentioned in a book, where it was referred to positively.[173] Here too we find a list of customs and character traits that, in the author's opinion, could only be Jewish. The author sent a copy of the book to the aforementioned philo-Semitic pamphleteer, John Dury, who had recently visited Menasseh ben Israel in Amsterdam. On this occasion he learned from the rabbi that a Jew named Aaron Levy, alias Antonio Montezinos, had discovered a tribe of Indians during his travels in South America that could only be descended from Hebrews. Levy had sworn a solemn affidavit to the Jewish community in Amsterdam that his statements were the complete truth. It appears that it was only from this point onwards that the Jews accepted the theory that their tribal kin were also resident in the New World.[174]

At this point, it seems that Menasseh ben Israel and his followers believed that the prerequisite for the above prophecy had almost been fulfilled. Travellers in previous years and centuries had confirmed that they had found Jews in China, Asia Minor, Ethiopia and Russia. In general, based on the geographical knowledge of the world at the time, it was therefore assumed that Jews were settled everywhere, with one exception: England. This country therefore had to be convinced as quickly as possible of the necessity of admitting Jews.[175]

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169 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, p. 37.
170 Wolf: *American Elements*, pp. 78-9. Translator's note: This strand of eschatological or Messianic thinking is known as Millenarianism, and was particularly strong during this period in both Christian and Jewish communities.
171 Hyamson: *Lost Tribes*, p. 116 ff.
172 Hyamson: *Lost Tribes*, p. 129 ff.
173 Hyamson: *Lost Tribes*, p. 133 ff.
174 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 24; Hyamson: *Lost Tribes*, p. 140 ff.
175 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 24 ff.; Dr. Adler: *Homage*, pp. 33-4.

International Jewry at Work

After all this, it is clear that the Jews of the world were turning their eyes to the emerging England. Picciotto, the Jewish historian, does not doubt in the least that some of the Jews in France, Spain, Portugal and in the Spanish Indies had ‘entreated Rabbi Menasseh to be their agent to entreat this favour for their coming to England, to live and to trade here’.[176]

Apparently Hyamson was of the same opinion, though he was not as explicit.[177] Wolf also does not seem to want to deny the cooperation of international Jewry. He reports that Menasseh ben Israel came to London accompanied by three other rabbis, one from Amsterdam, another from Prague, while the third Wolf speculates as being from Lublin, who journeyed to London to tell Cromwell about the persecution of Polish Jews from his own experience.[178]

A document survives, probably prepared by Cromwell or one of his advisors, which states that on the occasion of Menasseh ben Israel's negotiations in London:

> Many Jewish merchants had come from beyond seas to London, and hoped they might have enjoyed as much privilege here, in respect of trading, and of their worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob here in synagogues publicly, as they enjoy in Holland, and did enjoy in Poland, Prussia, and other places. But, after the conference and debate at Whitehall was ended, they heard by some, that the greater part of the ministers were against this; therefore they removed hence again to beyond the seas, with much grief of heart, that they were thus disappointed of their hopes.[179]

But since so many Jews from distant countries came to the conference in London, there must have been a connection between Menasseh ben Israel and international Jewry. Otherwise it is inexplicable as to why they were all in London at the time of the conference. They would certainly not want to miss a minute of the conference where it concerned getting the best deal for the Jews, as they wished to secure every advantage that might come with admission to England, while their brethren overseas avidly waited for news of the outcome of events. This is also mentioned in one of Menasseh ben Israel’s tracts:

> Where, after my arrivall, being very courteously received, and treated with much respect, I presented to his most Serene Highnesse, a petition, and some desires, which for the most part, were written to me by my brethren the *Jewes*, from severall parts of *Europe*, as your worship may better understand by former relations. Whereupon it pleased his Highnesse to convene an Assembly at *Whitehall*, of Divines, Lawyers, and Merchants, of different perswasions and opinions. Whereby mens judgements, and sentences were different. Insomuch, that as yet, we have had no finall determination from his most Serene Highnesse. Wherefore those few *Jewes* that were here, despairing

176 Picciotto, p. 27. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
177 Hyamson: *History*, p. 142 ff.
178 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xxxvii.
179 ‘Narrative…’ in *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), pp. 621-2. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

> of our expected successe, departed hence. And others who desired to come hither, have quitted their hopes, and betaken themselves some to *Italy*, some to *Geneva*, where that Commonwealth hath at this time, most freely granted them many, and great privileges.[180]

This is further evidence that Jews from all over Europe, if not the world, were gathered in London with knowledge of the negotiations.

However, these individuals were probably not those who only wanted to look after their own interests, but rather those who at the same time represented certain Jewish communities in other parts of the world, as one can conclude from the following:

The modern Jewish historian Cecil Roth, apparently without realising it, succeeded in discovering extremely important documents in the Italian archives connected to this matter, thereby providing the best evidence of the Jews cooperating internationally. This shows, among other things, that a Jew from Livorno [also known as Leghorn] named Raphael Supino played a crucial role in the negotiations with Cromwell on behalf of the Jews of Italy. As a Jewish colony, after the Marranos emigrated from the Iberian Peninsula, Livorno was not only numerically very large, but was also seen as a leading city in the Mediterranean. The Jews there had been granted great privileges, and we find not only Marranos, but Hebrews from all parts of Europe who were attracted by the freedoms afforded them.

Supino belonged to one of the very oldest Jewish families in Italy. He was a wealthy merchant with connections all over the world. One of his main lines of business was to redeem the Christians and Mohammedans who had been captured by pirates in the Mediterranean.[181] As a middleman between the pirates and the relatives of the prisoners, he certainly did not make a bad living.

In an old document there is a report from English visitors to Livorno that in 1652 they met a courteous Jew who spoke a little English, ‘a very grave, proper man’ who may have been Supino. What is interesting is that he told them how he ‘longed to hear that England would tolerate the Jews’.[182]

In any case, it is certain that Supino appeared in London in 1655 for Menasseh ben Israel's negotiations with Cromwell, as Roth found out from embassy letters of the then Duke of Tuscany. Supino was a subject of this prince, who also had an interest in the negotiations in London and probably feared that, in the event of an agreement, rich Jews would forsake his country for England.

This correspondence from the Tuscan embassy in London shows that Supino conducted negotiations in a prominent position alongside Menasseh ben Israel.

We learn from his letters that Supino became acquainted with ‘the most considerable persons of London and the Universities’, either during the course of the Whitehall Conference, or while on a special visit to Oxford and Cambridge. We therefore agree with Roth that Supino was a representative of world Jewry in London.

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180 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, pp. 38-9. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Note that Carvajal’s existing Marrano community was unaffected by the negotiations, and continued to reside in London, as before.

181 Roth: *New Light*, p. 121. Translator’s note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source.

182 Roth: *New Light*, p. 122.

The interest that existed throughout the then known world in this enterprise of world Jewry can also be seen from the further correspondence on this subject that Roth discovered from the Venetian embassy in London to the Venetian government.[183]

In one of the letters, the Venetian envoy Sagredo mentions that a Jew from Antwerp commenced to feel Cromwell's body all over, to make sure that he was indeed of flesh and blood.[184]

The finding that Supino worked with Menasseh ben Israel is interesting in that it shows that it was not only the Marranos, some of whom were in dire straits, who wanted to go to England, but also the Jews living unmolested and with complete freedom in Italy at this time.

But Roth made an even greater discovery for us. While he was conducting research into other matters in the former state archives of Venice, he happened upon a very old printed document, signed by Menasseh ben Israel himself, which was sent to the Jewish communities around the world on the day of his departure for London and which was written in Portuguese. Roth is surprised that Menasseh ben Israel chose this language and not Hebrew. But we do not see anything unusual about this, because at that time Portuguese was the main business language among the Jews. In addition, as Roth himself points out, there were probably further copies published in other languages. Since Menasseh ben Israel himself spoke ten languages and ran his own printing press, this assumption seems entirely justified. Finally, the content leaves no doubt that the letter was addressed to world Jewry. A translation reads as follows:

THE HAHAM MENASSEH BEN ISRAEL

to all persons of the Hebrew nation living in Asia and in Europe, especially to the Holy Synagogues of Italy and Holstein, S. P. D. [*Salutem plurinam dicit* – bids abundant peace]

It is notorious to all those of our nation how I have laboured for a long time past in order that there should be conceded to us in the most flourishing Commonwealth of England the right to public exercise of our religion, moved not only by the merit of the case, but also by certain letters from virtuous and prudent individuals: as also how, after having set out on the road on two occasions, I was persuaded by my relatives, for certain political reasons, to postpone the journey for the time being. Now therefore do I again make known to all how, although not yet fully recovered from a long illness, moved only by zeal and love of my people, and (as I have signified) neglecting all of my private interests, I am setting out to-day on this enterprise: which I pray may be to the service of God and to our common good. It is true that certain persons who are in the employment, and above all under the protection, of most clement Princes and Magistrates, have little esteem of this perpetual care of mine. Nevertheless, considering the common applause, the general good, the affliction of those of our people who are to-day so oppressed, who could find refuge and remedy in that most mighty commonwealth, without prejudice to any other: having regard, too, for the many souls who, dissimulating their religion, dwell scattered in so many parts of Spain and France: it was impossible for me to neglect an affair of such merit, even though it be at the cost

183 Roth: *New Light*, pp. 123, 126 ff.

184 Roth: *New Light*, p. 127. Translator’s note: Roth’s view of this tale was that it was ‘no doubt an exaggeration of a little Oriental hyperbole in which one of the petitioners indulged on being admitted to audience’.

> of my faculties. I have been informed by letters, and by faithful correspondents, that to-day this English nation is no longer our ancient enemy, but has changed the Papistical religion and become excellently affected to our nation, as an oppressed people whereof it has good hope. Nevertheless, since there is nothing sure or certain in this world, I supplicate all of the Holy Congregations that in their orisons they pray affectionately to God to give me grace in the eyes of the most benign and valorous Prince, his Highness, the Lord PROTECTOR, and in those of his most prudent council, that he may give us liberty in his land, where we may similarly pray to the most high God for his prosperity. Farewell!
>
> Amsterdam, September 2, 5415 [September 2, 1655 A. D.].
>
> (signed) o. H. Menasseh ben Israel.[185]

On the back of the document there is the following endorsement in Italian and Hebrew: 'Letter in which R. Menasseh of Amsterdam informs the Holy Congregations of his journey to England to obtain permission to found a *Beth Keneseth* or "scolla" whereat to pray.'[186]

The address and content leave not the slightest doubt that Menasseh's communication was aimed at world Jewry. The fact that he particularly addresses the Jewish communities in Holstein (probably in Hamburg, Altona and Glückstadt) and Italy indicates that his support came mainly from these places. The former were mainly branches from Amsterdam, so had more of a Marrano character, while the latter were of a mixed nature. That the cooperation of the Jews in Italy was particularly strong is also evident from the presence of leading Jew Supino in London.

From the content we see that the previous unsuccessful efforts of Menasseh ben Israel were known to world Jewry, as it is also evident that apparently some Jews who were doing well in certain places of the world did not care about his mission.

Finally, one can safely conclude from the circular that it was not the first of its kind, but was preceded by at least one which was similar, as can be seen from his statement: 'Now therefore do I again make known to all…'

Roth admits that Menasseh ben Israel was acting 'not as a private individual, but as emissary of all the house of Israel'.[187] But he believes that this letter from Menasseh only arose out of the rabbi's conviction of the importance of his mission and his desire for his people's prayers. We cannot concur with him on this. International Jewry was at work, Menasseh ben Israel its spokesman. Long and detailed negotiations probably preceded his journey, and, in the words of Roth himself, Menasseh 'seems to have been at the outset well enough supplied with money'. International Jewry chose him as its representative and demanded to be kept informed, hence Menasseh's circulars. How perfect the cooperation was is also shown by the fact that numerous Jews were in London with Menasseh ben Israel. International Jewry at work! It would be difficult for the Hebrews to refute the facts of this episode of their history, as presented in this chapter.

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185 Roth: *New Light*, p. 114. Translator's note: Roth's English translation of the letter is reproduced verbatim from the article cited, and a reproduction of Menasseh's original document is the cover illustration for this volume.

186 Roth: *New Light*, pp. 115-6. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

187 Roth, *New Light*, pp. 114, 115, 118. Translator's note: Both quoted elements are reproduced verbatim from page 115 of the original source.

Menasseh ben Israel as Spokesman for International Jewry

In a previous chapter, we saw how the ground in England was largely prepared for Menasseh ben Israel by pro-Jewish writings. The Jewish side was active primarily through its spokesman, who in 1650 published a book in Spanish, Latin and Hebrew titled *The Hope of Israel*.[188] In this book, Menasseh ben Israel came to the conclusion that, according to the prophecies, the Jews would have to endure many sufferings, but that the bloody Spanish and Portuguese persecutions were among the worst in all of Jewish history. However, it looked to him as if the return of the Jews to the Promised Land was not far off. He dealt in great detail with the problem of the *Ten Lost Tribes* and took the view that the prophesied dispersion of the Jews around the world was complete after the discovery of America, with the exception of England.

He then listed the names of famous Jewish martyrs, and attempted to demonstrate the noble character traits of the Jews. Finally, he mentioned their great achievements in politics, which they achieved through their work for the princes. He explained the Jews' 'Constancy under so many evills' as proof that 'God doth reserve us for better things.'[189]

His comments were written with England in mind, to highlight the advantages that could be obtained from the Jews. It is therefore not in the least surprising that Menasseh ben Israel published this book in English translation, probably with the help of influential Englishmen of the period – Thomas Fuller and Nathaniel Holmes likely among them. The book quickly sold out of two editions.[190]

Menasseh had written a special introduction to his translation for England, which was dedicated to 'the High Court, the Parliament of *England*, and to the Councell of State'. He highly praised the successes of the English government of the time, and was pleased to be able to dedicate his book to the English government, hoping thereby to 'gain your favour and good will to our Nation, now scattered almost all over the earth'.

The book was particularly well received in Puritan circles. The Earl of Middlesex sent a public letter of thanks to Menasseh ben Israel entitled: 'To my dear Brother, Menasseh ben Israel, the Hebrew philosopher.'[191] On October 10th, 1651, shortly after the book was published in England, we find minutes from a Council of State meeting in which it is requested that the Lord General, Lord Commissioner Whitelock, Mr. Strickland and Sir Gilbert Pickering form a committee to peruse and respond to Menasseh ben Israel's letter. It is not certain if this is a reference to Menasseh ben Israel's aforementioned dedication, but it seems doubtful as the text in question did not necessarily require an answer. Whatever the case, it appears from this record that the English government was already in contact with Menasseh at this point.[192] A few months previously, detailed negotiations had also been underway between the Dutch and English governments. An English delegation led by one of Cromwell's relatives, Oliver Saint John, made great efforts in

188 Roth: *History of the Marranos*, p. 262 ff.

189 Menasseh ben Israel: *The Hope of Israel*, Section 32. p. 38. Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source.

190 Hyamson: *History*, p. 151; Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 33.

191 Dr. Adler: *Homage*, p. 34. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

192 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1651, p. 472. Translator's note: In 1656, Menasseh mentioned writing to the Council of State to request another passport (the first one they issued after the publication of *The Hope of Israel* being no longer valid), so this 1651 letter may have been the first passport request. See Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xvii.

Amsterdam to link the two states as closely as possible through a solemn treaty.[193] Menasseh emphasises that on the occasion of the English delegation's visit to Amsterdam, a solemn invitation was extended to them by the Jews, which the English also accepted. They were welcomed into the Amsterdam synagogue ‘with as great pomp and applause, Hymns and cheerfulnesse of mind, as ever any Soveraigne Prince was’.[194] It can no longer be determined what response, if any, was given to Menasseh's aforementioned letter. But it was certainly not of great importance because, as is well known, on the previous day, October 9th, 1652, the Navigation Act had come into force.[195] Apparently the Jews' negotiations with the English government did not make much progress due to the political tension between England and the Dutch Republic.[196] One would assume that these negotiations might even have stopped after the outbreak of war in June 1652, since Menasseh was, after all, a citizen of the Netherlands and as such could not legitimately negotiate with a government with which his country was at war. Not even close. For the Jew Menasseh, the war between England and Holland was not the slightest obstacle; in fact, he was in principle prepared to come to London for the negotiation. In the English state archives we find an entry for November 22nd, 1652 that a passport had been issued to Menasseh ben Israel for travel to England.[197] Almost a month later we find another entry for a Council of State meeting, referring to the passport issued to Menasseh:

> Dec. 17. Whitehall.
>
> Pass for Menasseh Ben Israel, a Rabbi of the Jewish nation, well reported of for his learning and good affection to the State, to come from Amsterdam to these parts. All officers to give him the favourable entertainment due to well-affected strangers, they behaving themselves without offence.’[198]

It is difficult to understand why a citizen of one state would negotiate with the government of another hostile to his country, and in times of war such action must rightly be regarded as treason.

However, for some reason nothing came of Menasseh's planned journey.

In the spring of 1653, Cromwell had dissolved Parliament and convened a new one on his own initiative, known to history as the Barebones Parliament, made up of Puritan clergy, officers and religious zealots. In all seriousness, the representatives of this Parliament proposed that the Council of State should consist of 70 members, based on the Jewish Sanhedrin.

The first meeting took place on July 5th, 1653.[199] Menasseh must have immediately brought the Jewish Question before this new Parliament, which was heavily constituted in his favour, because as early as July 29th, 1653 we find a letter from an Englishman according to which there had been several motions in Parliament to grant the Jews permission to trade in the same way as in Holland.[200] Apparently they wanted Menasseh ben Israel to represent his cause in England himself. There is another official entry on September 16th, 1653 which records the Council of State issuing a

193 Gardiner, Vol. II, p. 80 ff.
194 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel* p. 77. Translator’s note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source.
195 Gardiner, Vol. II, p. 82.
196 Gardiner, Vol. II, p. 124 ff.
197 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1651/52, p. 577.
198 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1652/53, p. 38. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
199 Gardiner, Vol. II, p. 216 ff.; Lingard, Vol. VIII, p. 398 ff.
200 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. I, p. 387. Translator’s note: This is the same reference as that of footnote 101 (see corresponding page for the reproduction of the original source quotation).

passport for him.[201] However, the war between England and Holland was still not over, and Menasseh apparently did not make his trip to England, perhaps because of poor health, or perhaps because of personal considerations for his position as a rabbi in Amsterdam at a time of heightened political tensions.

On April 5th, 1654, England and Holland made peace, and on September 5th of the same year the first Parliament to follow the Barebones Parliament met for the first time. This too was short-lived and fell apart in January 1655.[202]

Nevertheless, Menasseh must also have addressed this Parliament. There are no records of this in the state archives, but in the 1655 two-part treatise which has come to be known as *The Humble Addresses*', in the second part, titled *A Declaration to the Common-wealth of England,* he speaks of 'humble addresses to the late Honourable Parliament'.[203]

It is certain that the aforementioned Jew Dormido, a brother-in-law of Menasseh, went to England at the end of 1654. Dormido sent a request to the government for the admission of Jews to England, which is still preserved today. There is no need to enter into further detail on this matter as it does not contain much of interest.[204]

Dormido was apparently received by Cromwell with the greatest alacrity. He immediately forwarded the request to the Council of State and recommended that it be approved and processed expeditiously.[205] However, the Council did not follow Cromwell's instructions and rejected the application after a month with the laconic response: 'Council saw no cause to make any order.'[206]

The Jews' cause was making no progress in Dormido's hands. The Jews and their supporters recognised that only one person was able to prevail, namely Menasseh ben Israel. In October 1655, Menasseh arrived in London accompanied by three rabbis.[207] They were received with great ceremony and accommodated in a magnificent house opposite the new Stock Exchange on the Strand, a street where mostly only Englishmen of importance and foreigners of rank lived.

How were the political forces in England arrayed when Menasseh arrived? Cromwell strongly favoured the Jews. The Council of State, on the other hand, was, contrary to expectation, not as favourable as had been initially assumed. Despite Cromwell's dictatorial power, public opinion could not be overlooked in all of the discussions, some of which were led by influential English people who were clearly against the admission of Jews. Popular rejection of Jewish readmission was expressed in speech and writing. Letters have survived which confirm this attitude.[208] As one of Ambassador Francesco Salvetti's reports to the Grand Ducal Government of Tuscany stated: 'Very

201 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1653-54, p. 436.
202 Lingard, Vol. VIII, p. 436 ff.
203 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 78. Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source. Aldag appears to be mistaken in his assertion that Menasseh addressed the Parliament in person. The rest of the quotation is: '…if by humble addresses to the late Honourable Parliament, I might obtaine a safe-Conduct once to transport my self thither.' This is clearly a reference to Menasseh previously addressing the Council of State by letter, to request a passport, as is evidenced by the historical record (see footnotes 192, 201). Note also that the word 'once' in his statement indicates that he had never previously been in England prior to the October 1655 visit.
204 See Wolf: *American Elements*, Appendix, Document II (pp. 88-9) for a reproduction of this petition.
205 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1654, p. 393; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xxxiv. Translator's note: There were two petitions from Dormido involved, both of which Cromwell recommended, and both of which were rejected by the Council, but it is only the request for Jewish readmission that is of interest here. [The second petition was about the restoration of Dormido's personal property in Brazil, which has already been touched on earlier.]
206 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1654, p. 407. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. See also footnote 135 for more on this matter.
207 Hyamson: *History*, p. 154; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 36 ff.
208 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, pp. 51, 58.

few of this nation are agreed to let them [the Jews] make their nest in these lands.' Ten days later, on the last day of 1655, he wrote in another letter: 'It is a matter which generally encounters great opposition, especially from the preachers, merchants and populace.'[209] The same year saw the publication of a small work by the baptised Jew Paul Isaiah, that dealt with a conversation about religious matters between a Christian and a Hebrew, the latter insulting Christianity and especially the person of Jesus Christ, while the Christian defended both.[210] Isaiah's book is of no great literary merit, but at that time it was probably suitable for influencing the masses who were all too ready to oppose Jewish entry from the outset. However, the best writing to come out over the course of the negotiations was by William Prynne, who we shall discuss in a later chapter. The accuracy of the assertion that Oliver Cromwell intended to lease the customs revenue to the Jews cannot be verified by the extant documentation, but Thomas Violet, a contemporary of Cromwell, believed that he was willing to go this far.[211] The people also had this fear and were extremely upset by the idea. Wolf simply describes this as an unfounded rumour that was spread to the detriment of the Jews. Exactly the same applies to the announcement that the Jews had come to London for another attempt to purchase St. Paul's Cathedral and the Bodleian Library. However, since it has already been proven in this volume that such negotiations had indeed previously taken place, it is hard to see why they could not also have been seriously discussed at this point in time, especially since these earlier proposals had likewise been put forward alongside a request for readmission.

The still-strong Royalist party also did everything to disrupt the negotiations between Cromwell and the Jews. As we will see below, the Royalists had themselves established connections with the Jews, in particular to obtain Jewish financial support for the restoration of the monarchy.[212]

For the Royalists to achieve this goal, however, it was necessary that the Jews not be granted the right to settle under Cromwell's rule, because the Royalists' reward for the financial help sought from the Jews was to consist of this privilege, especially in the event of the royal family's return. If the Jews were to achieve this goal under Cromwell, they would not have the slightest incentive to offer financial backing to the Royalists. Although a reprehensible political game, in 1655 it came to the aid of the general anti-Jewish movement.

English public opinion was also supported in its anti-Jewish attitude by a foreign power – Holland – which feared that if the negotiations were to take place, rich Jews would emigrate, which displeased the government of the time, not least because the Dutch economy was largely in Jewish hands. In view of this fact, Dutch ambassador Willem Nieupoort invited Menasseh for an audience with him in London and questioned him about his intentions. He reports in a letter dated December 31st, 1655, that 'Manasseh Ben Israel hath been to see me; and he did assure me, that he doth not desire any thing for the Jews in Holland, but only for such as sit in the inquisition in Spain and Portugal.'[213]

In the face of the hostile attitude of the English people, Menasseh practically only had the support of Cromwell. The men who had appeared on behalf of the Jews in earlier years were, for the most part, unable to help the Jewish cause. Roger Williams was in America, John Sadler, given his official position, could no longer intervene in the matter as actively as before, and Hugh Peters no

209 Roth: *New Light*, pp. 128-9. Translator's note: Roth's English translations reproduced verbatim from original text.
210 Isaiah, especially p. 36 ff. Translator's note: For more on this colourful character, see footnote 262.
211 Violet: *Petition against the Jewes*, pp. 2, 7.
212 Hyamson: *History*, p. 155; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 40.
213 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, p. 333. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (sharp-eyed readers will notice that this is a previously cited quotation, corresponding to footnote 165).

longer had any real influence. In addition, Thurloe, Blake and General Monk did not want to risk alienating the city's merchants, who were the fiercest opponents of resettlement given the expected competition from the Jews.

Therefore public opinion had to be changed because Cromwell, as developments confirmed, could not force the government to approve Jewish resettlement against the will of the people.

Menasseh and his advisors believed that they could bring about this change in public opinion through a widely distributed pamphlet, which they published in two parts. The first part was titled: *To His Highnesse the Lord Protector of the Common-wealth of England, Scotland and Ireland. The Humble Addresses of Menasseh Ben Israel, a Divine and Doctor of Physick, in behalf of the Jewish Nation.* The second part had the title: *A Declaration to the Common-wealth of England, by Rabbi Menasseh Ben Israel, shewing the Motives of his coming into England.*

Hyamson and Wolf both argue that Menasseh had already completed this pamphlet before his arrival in England. The latter is even of the opinion that it was drawn up as early as 1651 with the collaboration of John Thurloe, Cromwell's secretary.[214]

As its title suggests, the first part, which is only three pages long, is addressed to Cromwell. Menasseh explained that God most favoured the Jews and continued to ensure that no harm came to them. Kings such as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes and Pompey, who treated the Jews badly, had been punished by God. God's promise to Abraham – '*I will blesse them that blesse thee, and curse them that curse thee*' – appeared always to be fulfilled. In view of the recent benevolence shown by powerful people, Menasseh, as one of the least of the Hebrews, had to ask Cromwell for the grace to allow the Jews a place in England, to worship the great and glorious name of God in their own synagogues. He did not doubt that 'this most equitable Petition' would be easily granted, as even the pagans of old did grant this right, out of reverence for the God of Israel, just as the Egyptians allowed the high priest Onias to build another temple in their country. The English ambassadors had been received in the synagogues of Amsterdam with pomp and hymns, and the Jews therefore hoped that the old hatred from the time of the monarchy had been transformed into goodwill and that the rigorous laws against 'so innocent a people' would 'happily be repealed'. Undoubtedly the influence of Cromwell, who had shown them so much respect and favour from the beginning, would ensure this. In the name of the Jews Menasseh therefore entreated Cromwell to permit the free exercise of religion in England, and in return the Jews 'shall pray for the happiness and Peace of this your much renowned and puissant Common-wealth'.

The structure and content of these statements is typically Jewish. First there is the implied threat, because otherwise the references to Pharaoh etc. cannot be understood, and then one moves on to the sweetest flattery.

The *Declaration to the Common-wealth* is considerably longer and consists of 29 pages including the preface.

In the preface Menasseh explained the motives for his mission. In addition to the free exercise of religion for his people, he wanted a general settlement of Jews in England so that they would be scattered all over the world, a fact that was necessary for the appearance of the Messiah. He then touched on the benefits that would accrue to England through the increased importation and exportation of goods. Finally, he would welcome the arrival of Jews into England because he was so warmly attached to the English nation and has always extolled the English Commonwealth in his

214 Hyamson: *History*, p. 154; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 38.

writing and deeds. He ends his preface with the following words, which will give the reader an idea of the techniques used to persuade the audience:

> …*I persuade my selfe that they* [the English] *will be mindfull of that Command of the Lord our God, who so highly recommends unto all men the* love of strangers*; much more to those that professe their good affection to them. For this I desire all may be confident of, that I am not come to make any disturbance, or to move any disputes about matters of Religion; but onely to live with my Nation in the feare of the Lord, under the shadow of your protection, whiles we expect with you* the hope of Israel *to be revealed.*

He introduces the first chapter of the *Declaration*, titled 'How Profitable The Nation of the Iewes are.', with the following words:

> *Three* things, if it please your Highnesse, there are that make a strange *Nation* wel-beloved amongst the Natives of a land where they dwell (as the defect of those *three* things make them hatefull: viz. *Profit*, they may receive from them; *Fidelity* they hold towards their Princes; and the *Noblenes* and purity of their blood.

In Menasseh's opinion, profit was 'a most powerfull motive, and which all the World preferres before all other things: and therefore we shall handle that point first'. Through 'having banished them from their own Country, yet not from his Protection', God gave the Jews the natural instinct to make money and 'thrive in Riches and possessions'. Since then the trade in currencies, diamonds, dyes, wine, oil and other valuable commodities has been largely in their hands, and on their readmission to England they would bring with them their capital and business connections, which would cause an increase in trade, which in turn would bring in tax, and customs revenue would be increased. It was true that the Jews acquired great wealth, but this was only made possible for them by the providence of God, so that through accumulated treasure they would find favour in the eyes of the rulers and peoples.

Menasseh then explained in detail that the Jews have a trade presence in almost every country on earth. Some of them even enjoyed high honours and were privileged by their princes.

Moreover, the Hebrews had a huge advantage over all other foreigners because they never left their host nation, whereas other foreign peoples only stayed long enough to make their fortune and then return with that fortune to their native soil, 'peaceably to enjoy their estate'. The Jews, on the other hand, having no native country to which to return, stayed where they were with their wealth.

This is not the place to castigate the perniciousness of the Jews' profit-seeking to the detriment of their country, but it should be noted that this reason given by Menasseh in favour of Jewish settlement can at least be used as a counter-argument to the same extent.

He called the second chapter of the *Declaration*: 'How Faithfull The Nation of the Jewes are.'[215] Among other things, he asserted that Jews were loyal citizens in ancient Egypt and Rome.

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215 Menasseh ben Israel: *The Humble Addresses*, p. 1 ff. Translator's note: All quotations and quoted elements relating to Menasseh's two-part pamphlet are reproduced verbatim from the original source.

Especially with regard to the latter example, this statement reads like a mockery of the known facts, because 'the Roman imperial period is filled with a chain of Jewish riots and unrest instigated by Jews at all ends of the empire'.[216] The revolts they caused in Alexandria and Palestine have long been known. In 1137 they sparked a revolt in France that resulted in terrible bloodshed. The same thing happened in Persia in 1138 and 1174. A Jewish revolt against the government in Spain broke out in 1157.[217] Many other uprisings instigated by Jews can be cited from history, but the above examples will suffice for our purpose.

Near the end [p.20], he addressed three accusations that are repeatedly made against the Jews. These '*three most false reports*' are the allegations of usury, child ritual murder and Jewish attempts to convert Christians to Judaism. That Jews are usurers was only partially true, he asserted, and 'though in Germany there be some indeed that practise usury', the Sephardic diaspora living in Turkey, Italy, Holland and Hamburg rejected all usury.

It was likely that Menasseh had no need to spread the word about the unassailably noble character of his ethnic kin. This task had already been done for him by Christian writers, in particular by the Englishman Henry Jessey in his book *The Glory and Salvation of Jehudah and Israel* [the only extant copy is a 1653 Dutch translation] and by Edward Nicholas.

On October 31th, 1655, Menasseh waited in front of the entrance to the Council Chamber of the Council of State and asked to be allowed to present certain books, undoubtedly his own works, given that *The Humble Addresses* would have recently been published at that time.[218]

The Jews and their supporters experienced bitter disappointment with the tracts. In no way were they able to change public opinion; they only brought additional opponents onto the scene. Various tracts, such as *Case of the Jews Stated*, were published immediately afterwards by the opposing side. Prynne gives us a vivid description of the popular sentiment in the preface to his book, which he has titled 'To the Christian Reader':

> As I kept on my way, in *Lincolnes Inne* Fields, passing by seven or eight maimed Soldiers on Stilts, who begged of me; I heard them say aloud one to another, *We must now all turn Jews, and there will be nothing left for the poor*. And not far from them another company of poor people, just at *Lincolns-Inne* back Gate, cried aloud to each other: *They are all turned Devils already, and now we must all turn Jews*. Which unexpected concurrent Providences and Speeches, made such an impression on my Spirit, that before I could take my rest that night, I perused most of the passages in our English *Histories* concerning the Jews *carriage* in *England*, with some of their misdemeanors in other parts, to refresh my *memory*, and satisfie my *judgement*; making some Collections out of them, which after I enlarged and digested into this ensuing *Demurrer*… [219]

216 Fried, p. 111.
217 Leslie, p. 29.
218 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655, p. 402. Translator's note: (from the source) 'Order – on hearing that Manasseh Ben-Israel, a Jew, is attending at the door with some books which he wishes to present to Council – that Mr. Jessop go out to receive them, and bring them in.'
219 Prynne, preface of his work *Short Demurrer.* Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. The preface is unnumbered, but it corresponds to pp. iv-v in both the first and second editions.

The negotiations continued, and the Council of State apparently soon dealt with the writings presented by Menasseh. In the state papers we find a list of Menasseh's various requests to Cromwell as early as November 13th, 1655. Apparently, in addition to the tracts, Menasseh had submitted a special list of requests to the Council of State, the entry for which is reproduced below:

> Requests to the Protector by Manasseh Ben Israel, on behalf of the Hebrew nation:
>
> (1) To take us as citizens under your protection; and for our greater security, to order your chiefs and general-at-arms to defend us on all occasions.
>
> (2) To allow us public synagogues in England and other places under your power, and the exercise of our religion.
>
> (3) To give us a cemetery out of town, for quiet interment of our dead.
>
> (4) To allow us to trade freely as others in all sorts of merchandise.
>
> (5) To elect a person of quality to receive our passports, and oblige us to swear fidelity, in order that those who come in may live without prejudice or scandal.
>
> (6) That we may not trouble the justices of peace with our contests, to license the chief of the synagogue, with 2 almoners, to reconcile differences according to the Mosaic law, with the right of appeal to the civil law, first depositing the sum in which the party has been condemned.
>
> (7) To revoke all laws against the Jewish nation, that we may live in greater security.
>
> These granted, we shall always be well affected, and pray for the success of all your enterprises. [*French, 2 pages.*].[220]

The state papers then continue with an entry stating that the request list was to be translated into English, followed by an entry listing the individuals (Lambert, Rous, Lisle, Wolseley, Pickering and Sydenham) who had been selected to form a Committee of Council under the Lord President, so that a report could be produced on the matter. The next entry in the record to appear for that date [Nov. 13, although there is a question mark printed beside the date, and indeed the date has to be erroneous – see footnote] is the following:

> Report on a request for admission of Jews into England to traffic, that it is lawful in point of conscience, if certain considerations be provided for:
>
> (1) The grounds urged by Manasseh Ben Israel, in his book lately printed in English, we conceive to be sinful in any Christian nation.
>
> (2) The danger is great of seducing the people of this nation in matters of religion.
>
> (3) Their having synagogues and places of worship is evil in itself, and scandalous to Christian churches.

220 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 15. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

(4) Their practices about marriage and divorce are unlawful, and will be of ill example.

(5) They are proved not to make conscience of oaths made or injuries done to Christians.

(6) The inhabitants of London suggest that it will be very injurious to trade.

We therefore consider:

i. That they should not be admitted to public judicatories, civil or ecclesiastic, which would grant them terms beyond the condition of strangers.

ii. They should not speak or act to the dishonour of Christ or His religion.

iii. They should not profane the Christian Sabbath.

iv. They should not have Christian servants.

v. They should bear no public office or trust.

vi. They should print nothing in our language opposing Christianity.

vii. They should not discourage any who try to convert them, but there should be a severe penalty on any apostatizing to Judaism. [*3 pages*][221]

221 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, pp. 15-6. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. It is highly unlikely that November 13th is the date for this entry, as not only was the original document from which this entry was inserted undated and unendorsed (see text corresponding to footnotes 285 and 286 for further discussion), but common sense dictates that it is virtually impossible for a government to both form a committee and produce an official committee report in a matter of hours after the issue to be reported upon has first been introduced for consideration. However, Henriques' thesis (footnote 285), that this was an informal 'pros and cons' list that somehow found its way into official papers, where it ended up wrongly classified, may be correct.

The Whitehall Conference

On November 14th, 1655, four members of the Council of State (Lisle, Wolseley, Pickering and Rous) met under the chairmanship of Lord President Henry Lawrence to set up a Committee of Council which would examine Menasseh's proposals, and to name those eligible to speak at the Committee discussions on the matter.[222] The very next day the names of the 28 men selected were published, which included almost all of the important people of the time.[223] Since legal questions also had to be resolved, the most eminent jurists Lord Chief Justice Sir John Glynne and Chief Baron of the Exchequer William Steele were appointed to the Committee, as well as distinguished diplomats such as Walter Strickland, and veterans of Cromwell's old guard such as John Lambert and William Sydenham. The City of London merchants had sent their Lord Mayor and several aldermen, accompanied by the richest and most powerful merchants in the form of Sir Christopher Pack, William Kiffen and Owen Rowe. The clergy were most strongly represented with sixteen theologians and divines, in Wolf's words 'the flower of Puritan piety and learning'. Among them were Dr Cudworth, Regius Professor of Hebrew, Dr. Owen, known for his advocacy of religious freedom, John Caryll, expositor of the Puritan Bible, and Dr. Whitchcote, representing Cambridge University. We also find Daniel Dyke, one of Cromwell's chaplains, Philip Nye, the champion of equal rights and Henry Jessey, the Baptist Judeophile and friend of Menasseh ben Israel.[224]

The first meeting was scheduled for December 4th, 1656. Apparently the government had held non-binding discussions with Menasseh in November. During this period the public was only concerned with what was going on in Whitehall, the English government district which was the venue for the conference. With the attention of the entire population, Cromwell opened the first meeting, at which Menasseh's aforementioned proposals were read out.[225] It can no longer be determined whether the Jews' willingness to pay £200,000 for the approval of the proposals was discussed on this occasion. In any case, in a work published at the end of the 18th century, the following text is found:

> In the year 1665 [*sic*], Oliver Cromwell being then Protector of the three nations, Mannasseh Ben Israel, a famous Jewish Rabbi afore-mentioned, came as an Agent from Holland to endeavour to procure the re-admission of the Jews into England, and made the following proposals to the Protector, for which they offered no less than £200,000.[226]

This is followed by Menasseh's seven proposals. The writer then continues in the next paragraph: 'When these proposals were read, the Protector said:…'

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222 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 20. Translator's note: The referenced state papers only mention three members as having been present (omitting Rous), but given that Aldag mentions four in his text it is likely that he had referenced Wolf (*Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 47), who lists the four members as presented above.

223 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 23.

224 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, pp. xlvii-xlviii; Hyamson: *History*, pp. 157-8. Translator's note: Wolf goes into greater detail on the invitees and their respective backgrounds, himself admitting: 'It is not difficult to see that the Conference had been carefully organised with a view to a decision favourable to the Jews.'

225 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 623.

226 Robert Burton, p. 203. Translator's note: Quotation (and that following) reproduced verbatim from original source. 'Robert Burton' was a pseudonym for Nathaniel Crouch.

From this presentation of events one might conclude that the offer of money was also one of the proposals and was therefore read out. Whatever the case, it is at least interesting that the writer conveyed the Jews' offer of a financial incentive. It is therefore to be expected that the Jews will characterise this published information as false or improbable, which is why it should be stated from the outset that Wolf himself used this work as an authentic source for the description of the Whitehall Conference.[227] If he had considered this author's historical account to be untrue, he would certainly have expressed his disagreement, given that he had done so with other authors. The presumed accuracy of this information can also be concluded from the fact that a comparison of Burton's information on the proceedings of the Whitehall Conference with the official government report shows complete concordance – further proof of the reliability of this source.[228]

Furthermore, Burton [Nathaniel Crouch] was a contemporary of Cromwell, and it is therefore quite possible that he had first- or second-hand knowledge of the events in the conference room.

But there are other historical sources from which one can conclude the accuracy of Robert Burton's assertion.

A namesake of his, Thomas Burton, who emerged politically around 1650 and was elected Member of Parliament in 1656,[229] has given us the same account. In his four-volume *Parliamentary Diary* we find that Menasseh offered £200,000 for his proposals to be accepted.[230] There is also the following snippet to be found in Henry Fletcher's *The Perfect Politician* (1660):

> …he [Cromwell] had a promise of 200000 l. from the Jews, in case he procured their Toleration here, as saith Mr. *Prynne* in his Narrative, p. 56, which sweet morsel he had swallowed by thus gratifying them, had not the design been opposed by Arguments as sharp as weapons of STEEL.[231]

Finally, a letter from 1656 has been preserved in which the writer, Colonel Richard Whitley, comments on the negotiations as follows:

> I had almost forgot that Cromwell sayes it is an ungodly thing to introduce the Jews; but, if he refuse them, it is because they refuse to purchase it at the summe desired unlesse they may have the authority of a parlement for theire being there with safety.[232]

After the Jews' proposals had been read out, Cromwell himself took the floor and laid down the programme of the proceedings in two questions:

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227 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, pp. xlix-li.
228 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 617 ff.
229 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1886 edition), Vol. VIII, p. 17.
230 Thomas Burton, Vol. I, p. 309. Translator's note: Burton references his source for this assertion as 'Whitlock'. It would appear that this was either Sir Bulstrode Whitlock (1605-1675), one of Cromwell's Commissioners of the Great Seal of England, or his son William Whitlock (1636-1717), also a parliamentarian.
231 Fletcher, p. 291-2. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Aldag's rendering of the quotation did not include the author's attribution to Prynne, which may have been an oversight.
232 *Nicholas Papers*, Vol. III, p. 255. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source [breviographs nothwithstanding].

(1) Whether it be lawful to receive the Jews?

(2) If it be lawful, then upon what terms is it meet to receive them?[233]

Wolf claims that the first question was ‘purely technical’ and was decided positively on the first day of the meeting. To justify his claim, he cites a source [Prynne, *Demurrer* Vol. I, Preface, pp. iii-iv]. However, this source does not state what Wolf claims, given that, as it is nothing but Prynne’s relation of a casual exchange with Independent theologian Philip Nye, it is far from conclusive [see footnote 233]. As his conclusion cannot otherwise be drawn from the context, we believe that his position is wrong. Apart from the traditional history accounts, it hardly seems possible that even the most capable lawyers would be able to make a decision without further ado, especially since their later statements testify to detailed study and are supported by precise sources. Finally, we found confirmation for our view in a newspaper report which states that ‘nothing has been done at the moment, but the whole matter will be dealt with in detail next Friday.’[234] Wolf's reference to Prynne cannot convince us otherwise. In his preface, Prynne does mention Nye's statement which Nye appears to believe nullifies the legal validity of the 1290 Edict of Expulsion, [i.e. ‘this business had been formerly moved in the Bishops time, rather than now’], however it is a stretch to take from this one phrase that the lawyers would therefore be of the opinion that there is no law standing in the way. Indeed, we believe that if it was the case that Nye had got this opinion from a lawyer (and there is no indication in the text that he had done so) then it is likely to have been told to him in a non-binding way in his capacity as minister during preparations for the next meeting.

From what can be determined, it would appear that discussions on this issue were only taken up in the negotiations following the December 4th meeting, which apparently took place on December 7th, 12th, 14th and 18th. It is not possible to glean from the various accounts the order of appearance of the speakers from the individual estates represented. The reports in question give only a general picture, while the newspaper notices mostly only report the fact of the conference.[235] Based on Cromwell's questions, it can be assumed that on December 7th, 1655, the second date of the conference, the question was actually discussed as to whether any laws conflicted with the admission of Jews. William Steele, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, gave a very detailed report on the history of the Jews in England up until that date. He began with the period before the Norman Conquest and argued that they had already experienced harsh treatment in the time of Constantine the Great. He then provided an overview of Jewish history up until 1290 and in particular spoke about the 1275 Statutum de Judaismo and the 1290 Edict of Expulsion. His historical remarks were then followed by his legal opinion, which agreed with that of Sir John Glynne, Lord Chief Justice of the Upper Bench: ‘There was no law which forbid the Jews returning into England; and it was therefore insisted on, that they might come upon terms and agreements, and might at first be only

233 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xlv ff. Translator’s note: Questions reproduced verbatim from Wolf. Regarding Wolf’s claim that the first question was decided positively on the first day of the conference (p. xlix), I believe that Wolf was being deliberately disingenuous here, because he does not outline what the referenced source contains to prove his thesis, and at Wolf’s time of writing, Prynne was an obscure author whose text would be difficult for readers to obtain and check for themselves. In fact, the totality of Wolf’s evidence is that Nye is reported as asking Prynne: ‘*Whether there were any Law of* England *against bringing in the Jews amongst us? for the Lawyers had newly delivered their Opinions, there was no Law against it.*’ However, there is no context to say if these lawyerly opinions (assuming Nye to be a reliable witness) had been accepted or ratified by the majority of the conference.

234 *Mercurius Politicus*, Issue 286, December 4th, 1655.

235 *Mercurius Politicus*, Issue 187 (December 7th, 1655); *Public Intelligencer*, Issue 10 (December 7th, 1655); *idem*. Issue 11 (December 12th, 1655).

permitted and connived at, which might be restrained if any inconveniency happened, and that all due care might be taken to prevent their blaspheming the Lord Jesus Christ, adoring the law, and seducing others.'[236]

The reasoning for their opinion has not come down to us. However, we can assume from Prynne's evidence to the contrary that they viewed the anti-Jewish law in question as having been given only by Edward I and not at the same time by Parliament. Had that indeed been the case, the law's validity would have expired on the death of Edward I. Prynne endeavours to show that it was not simply a royal decree of King Edward I, but a law that was passed by an act of Parliament and therefore, according to the English constitution, could only be repealed by the same process.[237] After the conference considered the first question settled, the members of the clergy were probably asked to give their opinion on the terms of Jewish readmission, since they were the most numerous and would be expected to adopt a favourable attitude due to their prior pro-Jewish attitude.

But those expecting a warm clerical welcome for the Jews were to be bitterly disappointed, because just like the lawyers, the clergy also demanded numerous conditions that restricted the Jews' freedom if they were admitted. The Jewish historians Hyamson and Wolf, while discussing the clergy's 'intolerance' at length, both fail to mention that the lawyers did not approve of unrestricted admission either.[238]

The attitude of the clergy was probably determined to a considerable extent by the opinion of a very learned man, Thomas Barlow, then librarian of the Bodleian Library. He was considered extremely skilled in logic and philosophy,[239] which is probably why he was considered particularly suitable to write the report. He later served as Bishop of Lincoln.

The work in question only appeared in print in 1692. But there can be no doubt that it was already written by the end of 1655. This is known from the foreword by the publisher/bookseller, which states that the printing of Barlow's work, 'The Case of the Lawfulness of Toleration of the *Jews'*, was based on manuscripts '*written with his own Hand*' and that it 'was writ at the Request of a Person of Quality, in the late troublesome Times; when the *Jews* made Application to *Cromwel*, for their Re-admission into *England*'.[240]

In view of the care that Thomas Barlow took in drafting the report, and the position of the clergy at the time on the Jewish Question, it is worthy of a brief overview.

First, the author examines the admission of the Jews from the standpoint of the state and the church.

With regard to the former, in his opinion it was first necessary to determine whether any laws against their settlement were currently in force. In contrast to the lawyers, he affirms this to be the case, but advises that this law should be repealed if it were found that the state were to be

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236 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), pp. 618-9; Robert Burton p. 205 ff.; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xlix. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from Burton, p. 208.

237 *Prynne*, Vol. I, Preface (p. 'iv'); *idem*. Vol. II, p. 135.

238 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. xlix; Hyamson: *History*, p. 159. Translator's note: Note that Hyamson is virtually a *calque* of Wolf. Interestingly, both authors, following Burton's *Judaeorum* (p. 204) mention the fact that Nonconformist delegate Matthew Newcomen raised the issue that 'the offering of children to Moloch, and other idolatry' might begin to take place on British shores, a suggestion which clearly sounded ridiculous enough to Wolf and Hyamson for them to repeat it in a bid to show the folly of England's Christian prejudice, but a suggestion which may give pause to the 21st-century reader.

239 Levy: *Barlow*, p. 152.

240 Barlow: *Case*, 'The Bookseller's Preface to the Reader' (p. 1). Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source.

advantaged by their admission. He does not want to investigate whether or not this is the case, as this decision is a matter for the government.[241] However, he pointed out that in the Middle Ages the Jews brought in enormous amounts of money for the Crown through taxes and compulsory contributions. In addition, the Jews were treated 'not only Unchristianly, but Inhumanely and Barbarously' before 1290, so 'it may be a Query whether the Common-wealth of *England* now are not bound in Conscience and Equity' to show 'real Kindness and Civility to the present *Jews*' by granting them admission to England.[242]

For him as a Christian it was essential to determine whether it was dishonourable, disadvantageous or scandalous to accept Jews into a Christian state. He denies this with six arguments. Jesus Christ and Christian merchants lived among Jews, and the laws of Christian countries always provided provisions for living together with them.[243]

In addition, the immigration of Jews does not appear to him to be detrimental to Christianity. In his opinion, conversion to the Jewish faith would only entail worldly disadvantages for Christians, since the Jews were 'a dispersed and vagabond People, Slaves where-ever they come, obnoxious to the Will of those Princes and States in whose Territories they live'.[244]

Finally, Barlow believes that no scandals of any kind would arise from the admission of the Jews, and therefore dedicates the rest of his work to discussing the terms of readmission itself.[245] He goes on to state that, when readmitting the Jews, care must be taken to ensure that:

> …this Law of Moses, and the old Testament, is (or at least should be) the adequate rule of the Jews Religion; and therefore so long as they keep to this, there is no thing in their Religion which is intollerable on this Account, as being against the Law of Nature. But if there be any thing in their Religion (as now they profess it) superinduced by Error or Custom, which is indeed against *Jus naturale*, that should not be tolerated in this, or any Christian Common-wealth.[246]

In Barlow's view, in order to convert the Jews, it was necessary to have 'Conversation and civil Communion' with them, as was done in the days of 'our Saviour and his Apostles'. There was therefore nothing unlawful in their 'Readmission into our Christian Common-wealth (with those bounds and limitations which we believe and hope the Piety and Prudence of the State will put upon them)'.[247]

Barlow emphasised that the Jews should not be given too much freedom, just as their rights had to be restricted by the state. The restrictions 'anciently laid upon them' can be found in 'our Histories, in the Imperial and Canon Laws, and in the old Capitulars and Canons of Councils', and with the prescriptions of these antique tomes in mind, the esteemed librarian recommended the following conditions:

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241 Barlow, pp. 4-7.
242 Barlow, pp. 7-9. Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source (p. 8).
243 Barlow, pp. 9-13.
244 Barlow, pp. 13-21. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (p. 18).
245 Barlow, pp. 21-34.
246 Barlow, pp. 34-45. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source (p. 42).
247 Barlow: pp. 45-65. Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source (pp. 48, 51-2).

1. No Toleration ever was, or *de jure* can be given them to profess or practice any thing against the Law of Nature.

2. No Toleration should be given them to speak any thing blasphemously or impiously against *Jesus Christ* and the *Gospel*: For though we may tolerate them in the Profession of a bad, yet not in that Blasphemy of a good Religion.

3. They never were nor should be permitted to circumcise Children of Christians, or seduce any Christians, to their Religion: Let them profess, but not propagate their Religion.

4. They were not permitted to carry any Office or Dignity in the Christian Common-weal, though it seems that sometimes even that was permitted them.

5. They were not permitted in any Suit or Difference between a *Jew* and a *Christian*, to draw the *Christian*, or his Cause before a *Jewish* Magistrate: For 'tis a ruled Case in the Imperial Law, *Judaeus Actor vel reus, Forum sequitur Christianum*.

6. They were never permitted to make Marriages with Christians, and the Glossator gives the Reason of it in Law, *Quia matrimonium debet esse communicatio divini & humani juris*. Whereas a *Jew* and *Christian* being of different Religions cannot *communicare in Sacris.* And this is consonant to the Law of the Gospel, which forbids us to be *unequally yoked*, upon which grounds, I believe all Marriages with Papists to be unlawful, that is, *Fieri non debuit*, 'tis unlawful to make such Matches, though that *factum valet*, when such a Match is made the Contract is valid.

7. Their frequent divorcing their Wives was tolerated. For though *Moses* seem to suffer it, yet the Emperours by express Edict forbid it.

8. By the Imperial Laws Polygamy, and plurality of Wives was not tolerated in them.

9. If any of the *Jews* turn *Christian* (by Civil Law) in case the *Jews* endeavoured to reduce him, and maliciously injured him, they were to be burned for it.

10. They might repair their old Synagogues, but were not tolerated (by the *Roman* Laws) to build new.

11. They were not tolerated to have any Christian Servants, Nurses or Midwives. *Can Praesenti.* 1. *Extra de Judaeis. Ex concilio malis conenti.*

12. By the Canon Law they might not come abroad [i.e. leave their homes] on *Good Friday*.

13. They were not permitted to wear Garments exactly of the Christian Fashion, but were to have distinct Habits, that all might know them to be *Jews*.

14. They might not be Physicians, or give Physick to any Christian.

15. They were not permitted to be of the *Roman* militia (though they were permitted to be Advocates) by the Rescript of *Honorius*, and *Arcadius* to *Romulianus P. P.*

16. The *Jews* being the greatest Usurers in the World, and believing they may justly take the highest Use they can get, (even *Vsurae centessimae*, if they could have it) of us

> Gentiles, it is all the Reason in the World, they should be limited in this particular, and not permitted to take more of us, than the Law permits us to take one of another.
>
> 17. They should be enjoyned to admit of friendly Collations and Disputations sometimes about Gospel Truths, and not obstinately to reject all means of Conversion, and Conviction, and Satisfaction of those seeming Reasons which keep them off from embracing the Truth: For there will be little hopes (or possibility) of their Conversion, if they be permitted obstinately to refuse all means of doing it.[248]

After citing another old English law from the pre-Norman period, in which Edward the Confessor deemed the Jews to be under the protection and ultimately the control of the king, Thomas Barlow concludes with the following remark:

> I wish the chief Magistrate [i.e. Cromwell] could admit them on these Terms, for so they, and all theirs (*omnia sua*) should be *suum propium* [i.e. his own property], which possibly might supply him with Money and so save Taxes.
>
> And upon these Terms I, (and I believe every body else) will willingly consent to their Readmission.[249]

It is interesting that Barlow, after very detailed study, came to restrictions on the rights of Jews that are partly consistent with our current views. Here in Germany too, there is a demand for a ban on mixed marriages and the employment of Christian servants in Jewish households.

One can imagine that this carefully prepared report by a recognised scholar made a great impression on the clergy, and so it is not surprising that the majority of the conference delegates agreed with these statements.

However, when clergymen were asked to give their opinion on an individual basis, there were still some who completely rejected the admission of Jews. Their main reason for this was that they feared contact with Jews would lead to Christians being ‘seduced and cheated’, and that ‘it would prove the subversion of many here, because people at this time were so soon drawn aside to new opinions’. Lord President Lawrence and Major General Lambert, weak-willed tools of Cromwell, argued vehemently against this view.[250]

Some wanted to see the Jews readmitted because the Hebrews only worked in trade, and not agriculture or manufacture. As a result, their entry could increase imports and thus lead to a reduction in the prices of imported goods due to a larger supply. It may be that the expected Jewish trade would cause the sales and earnings of one's own merchants to decline, but that would have to be accepted for the overall greater good, and especially since there was still the hope of converting the Jews, as the time, it was hoped, ‘is now at hand, even at the door’.[251]

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248 Barlow, pp. 66-73. Translator’s note: Quoted list of conditions (and other quoted elements) reproduced verbatim from original source. The list in the original source also comes annotated with references, which refer to the 26 Latin legal and historical sources which Barlow appends to the end of text for the satisfaction of the curious reader.

249 Barlow: pp. 74-5. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

250 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 620; Robert Burton, p. 204. Translator’s note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source [Burton].

Prynne's erstwhile acquaintance Philip Nye and Dr. Thomas Goodwin expressed themselves in the same spirit. They argued that the Jews, ‘as natural branches of the olive-tree’ who were currently being persecuted everywhere, had to be supported in some way. The Marranos were being treated particularly badly and as a result should be allowed to come to England to live and trade. ‘And it seems to some, that it would be very acceptable to the Lord, if favour be shewed them, so far as is lawful herein.’[252]

Joseph Caryll was of the opinion that the Jews were unjustly treated badly in the past. This crime still had to weigh on England as a sin. With consideration for their descendants, he argued, it would therefore be advisable to amend for past wrongs by accepting the Jews.

It can be seen that most conference delegates were not in favour of unconditional admission. Cromwell and his friends therefore had to try to bring about a change in sentiment by bringing in well-known people who were friendly to Jews. There was still a distinct possibility that the City's merchants, who had not yet been heard, would form a majority with those clergy who had advocated a complete rejection of readmission.

Before the third conference session, Cromwell therefore appointed three new delegates, men who were loyal to his Jewish cause, including Hugh Peters, who, as the oldest advocate for unrestricted readmission, was known for his significant support of the Jews. To everyone's astonishment, Peters had now also changed his mind. An epistolary discussion of his speech implies that he made comments about the Jews similar to ‘a people to whom many glorious promises are made, but they are as full of blasphemy as any under the sun’ and ‘a self-seeking generation’ who ‘made but little conscience of their own principles’. He also appeared to question, if only implicitly through his criticisms, whether they were Jews at all.[253] Apparently Cromwell and the Jews had little hope of success after this last session. Thurloe, the great friend of the Jews, wrote a very interesting letter to Henry Cromwell, the commanding general in Ireland, on December 17th, 1655, in which he confirmed the above statements:

> The divines doe very much differ in their judgments about it, some beinge for their admittance upon fittinge cautions, others are in expresse termes against it upon any termes whatsoever. The like difference I finde in the counsell, and soe amongst all Christians abroad. The matter is debated with great candor and ingenuitye, and without any heat. What the issue thereof will be, I am not able to tell you; but am apt to thinke, that nothinge will be done therein.[254]

Cromwell ordered another meeting to be held.

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251 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 621; Robert Burton, p. 205. Translator’s note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source [*Harleian Miscellany*].

252 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 617-8; Robert Burton, pp. 208-9. Translator’s note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source [*Harleian Miscellany*].

253 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. l (i.e. p. 50). Translator’s note: I have gone back to the original source of Wolf’s supposed quotation, the *Calendar of State Papers* 1655/56 pp. 57-8, and it appears, *pace* Wolf, that these are not in fact direct quotations from Peters, but an army captain talking about a report of the speech Peters made that was given to him by his correspondent, the speech itself apparently lost to history. What has been quoted from the letter, however, appears to be the gist of what Peters said about the Jews, and it indeed appears from both letters that if Rev. Peters did not go as far as to question whether the intended arrivals really were Jews, the criticisms contained in his speech certainly made the listening audience question the identity of those who said that they were Jews.

254 *State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. IV, p. 321. Translator’s note: Quoted verbatim from original source.

Opposition: The Anti-Jewish Prynne and His Work

Meanwhile, public opinion had become even more hostile to the Jewish cause. Prynne had worked day and night to complete the first part of his historical work on the Jews in England. Looking at this scholarly book, one has to wonder how he managed to compile, edit and publish the material within a maximum of 8-10 days.[255] A longer timeframe was certainly not available to him, because he began the book on December 6th, and it was published immediately before the Whitehall Conference session of December 18th, 1655.[256] It is still used today as a standard work for the history of the Jews in England up to this point in time, and we too have regularly referenced it as a source. Furthermore, none of the Jewish historians have been able to accuse Prynne of inaccuracy.

Given the importance of his book and the unusual circumstances surrounding its completion, we should go into some detail about the man and his work.

William Prynne was born in 1600. He studied at Oxford and later became a barrister at Lincoln's Inn. However, he was not only interested in law, but also showed a special interest in spiritual and historical matters from an early age. He harshly castigated what he considered to be unhealthy mores of his age and in this way came into conflict with the royal family. After a year in prison, he was sentenced to a heavy fine and life imprisonment in 1634.

His academic titles were stripped and his name expunged from the list of barristers. Despite everything, Prynne did not lose heart. He was allowed to continue writing in prison and still managed to publish his anti-Establishment tracts. He was made to pay a hard price for his dissent, however. One by one, his ears were cut off at the pillory and the letters S.L were branded on his cheeks, S. L. being the initials of the words ‘Seditious Libel’. All of his assets were confiscated.

The English revolution of 1641 brought Prynne freedom. On April 20th, 1641, the so-called Long Parliament declared his conviction illegal and restored all of his former rights to him with the promise of compensating him for all his sufferings.

He continued to act as a champion of parliamentary rights. During the disputes between the army and Parliament around 1657, he remained loyal to the latter and was arrested by the army for his activities. After three years of incarceration, he was released, whereupon he immediately resumed the fight for his religio-political views. He was called the Cato of his age.[257]

We have already seen how Prynne was induced to write his work by his conversations with Nye and by the anti-Jewish sentiment of the people. His main purpose was to educate the English population on the real history of the Jews,[258] which he must have succeeded extremely well in

255 Prynne, preface, p. 1 ff. Translator’s note: I have added ‘the first part of’ (his historical work) to Aldag’s original text, because Prynne later published a second volume of the book, which was given the title *The Second Part of a Short Demurrer.* Confusingly, while it could be read as a sequel, a lot of the information in the second edition being new, much of the first volume was also reproduced verbatim in the second volume. Prynne himself saw it as a work of two volumes rather than two editions, not least to ensure the purchasers of the first book would not feel cheated, and because the second book gave him a platform to reply to the critics of his first book. (To add to the confusion, there were also two separate editions printed of Volume I, with the second edition being slightly longer than the first and with some typographical differences in otherwise identical portions of text.) Although Aldag knew of the second book, given that he references it throughout his own work, for some reason in this chapter he tends to treat the first book (and first edition of this book) as the solitary, unmarked form, which is reflected in his referencing.

256 Prynne, preface, p. 1 ff. Translator’s note: See also Vol II preface.

257 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1896), Vol. XLVI, pp. 432-436.

258 Prynne, preface, p. 5.

doing. His success was due to the fact that, as a lawyer, he understood that the best method of persuasion was to let the facts speak for themselves, with his references to learned and ancient sources, not least of them the Bible, being found within the main text itself or annotated in the margins.

In his book, Prynne first of all points out that, as well as the anti-Jewish laws of Edward I's reign, there were also regulations in the reign of Queen Elizabeth that made it impossible for Jews to settle. The provisions of the laws passed against the Jesuits during Elizabeth's reign were also directed against the Jews. Although the Jews are not explicitly mentioned in these laws, this is only because there were hardly any Jews in the country at that time.

Numerous laws made it the duty of every branch of government, whether king or Parliament, to uphold the fundamental principle: 'SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX' [the welfare of the people is the highest commandment]. However, the admission of the Jews contradicted this principle, because the history of the Jews as explained by Prynne indicated that Jewish immigration into England would endanger both the wellbeing of the people and the security of the state.[259]

But the Hebrews everywhere were still exhibiting the same behaviour as in ancient England, Prynne told his readers. They were 'most grievous *Clippers, Coyners, Forgers of money, Usurers, Extortioners, and the greatest Cheators, Cozeners, Imposters in the world, in all their Merchandizes and Manufactures* whatsoever...'.[260]

Throughout history they were chronicled, from the Old Testament onwards, as notorious revolutionaries who would pose a threat to any polity, even their own kingdom.

> The Jews were alwayes heretofore a *very murmuring, mutinous, discontented, rebellious, seditious people for the most part, not only against God, but their lawfull Governors, Kings, Priests, Prophets, oft tumultuously rebelling against, disobeying, revolting from, deposing, murdering their Kings, and Sovereigns; and contemning, disobeying, slaying, killing the Prophets, Messengers whom God sent unto them*… And can we then in point of piety or policy; even in these distracted, rebellious, mutinous times, entertain, or bring in such a Nation, People as this amongst us? Or can our despised Ministry in this age, have any hopes of reclaiming or converting such a people, who have thus abused, murdered, stoned their own Prophets in former times, though immediatly sent unto them by God himself?[261]

The conversion of the Jews to Christianity would not an advantage to England, rather a danger, as it would then make it easier for them to 'seduce the unstable people to their Judaism and Infidelity'. There already were many of those foreigners who, in the guise of converted Jews, were

259 Prynne, pp. 54-6. Translator's note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source (p. 56; second edition p. 71). Note that the original quotation was also in all caps, for emphasis within the rest of the text.

260 Prynne, p. 57. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to p. 71 of the second edition, although note that some typographical elements, such as font, format, spelling and capitalisation, may vary between the first and second editions.

261 Prynne, pp. 64-5. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to pp. 79-80 of second edition.

abusing and cheating the English. How much bigger would this problem be once the Jews were permitted entry?[262]

Prynne then gave a very detailed account [pp. 73-76] of the historical Jewish expulsions around the world. If the contemporary reader were to consider these expulsions as justified by the Jews' crimes, then he would not understand why the Jews were being allowed back into England.

> Having therefore been thus frequently banished by Christian Kings, Princes, from time to time, at the earnest sollicitation of their godly Christian Ministers, Bishops, People; and by our King and Parliament too out of *England*, so long since, never to return again, what shadow, colour of Piety, Policy, Prudence, Justice, Law, Reason, there can be for any person or persons whatsoever to re-admit them (except the Argument of dishonest, private, filthy under-hand Bribes or Lucre, by which they usually scrue themselves into those places, whence they have been exiled) transcends my shallow capacity to comprehend, especially at this season, when we are so over-stored with English, that some think of sending and planting Colonies in another world; whither these Gold-thirsty Jews may do well to transplant themselves, if they be weary of their former habitations.[263]

Prynne then invoked classical antiquity, in which men like Lycurgus, Plato and Aristotle warned states not to accept strangers into their communities. It was therefore also dangerous for the English nation to allow Jews into the country, because, as he quoted from a learned scholar, himself drawing on Aristotle's *Republic*:

> *It is perillous to take Snakes into the Bosom, and Forraigners into the Commonwealth; for as they being refreshed with heat doe bite and sting; So these being enfranchised destroy the Republike. To prove this by arguments, we may consider that every Nation hath its proper manners and ceremonies which they bring along with them, & do not change with the climat when they come into another Country; Wherefore there is great danger, left by receiving strangers the ancient manners & Laws should be changed into new and forain. Now what sooner begets sedition than alteration of Laws and Customs? …What therefore is more perillous than the admission of Foraigners into our Commonwealth? Moreover, wherefore hath Nature instructed like to associate together with like, if it should draw men of strange and different manners into a Republike. Nature will not that sheep should be associated with wolves, neither wills Prudence that Natives should be coupled with foraigners; For* Philosophy *perswades this, that contraries cannot dwell in the same place; but strangers for the most part are enemies to the Citizens with whom they converse. Adde to this, that as Locusts are to the corn, so*

262 Prynne, pp. 72-3. Translator's note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source [corresponding to page 89 of second edition]. The reality of converted Jews using their newly found Christian status to seduce and scam well-meaning Christians of their money is discussed in Samuel [Translator's Bibliography], which not only gives the picaresque life of the vagabond Russian Jew 'Paul Isaiah' (previously mentioned in this study) and his equally roguish foreign associate 'Peter', but also discusses the phenomenon of Catholics masquerading as converted Jews for the purposes of Catholic subversion (giving the case of the ex-monk Alexander Ramsey the Scot, who was circumcised to become the baptised Jew Joseph ben Israel before his true identity was discovered).

263 Prynne, p. 76. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source [pp. 93-4 of second edition].

> *are foraigners to the Republike; for as they do wast and consume the grain of corn, so these devour the fruit of the Commonwealth; for although they are branches of the same plant, yet they suck not wholesom juyce but poyson from the root, wherewith at length the whole plant being infected perisheth.*

This policy of erecting barriers to the stranger, was, Prynne told his readers:

> *warranted by the Jews own practise, who had no dealings with the Samaritans, John 4:9,* and the *Samaritans* reciprocal carriage *towards the Jews, whom they would neither lodge nor entertain*, Luke 9, 51, 52, 53. Why we should not upon this account seclude those alien Jews, so different from us both in manners, customs, Laws, Religion, and obeying not the Laws of our Saviour Christ Jesus, *it being not for the* Kings or the Kingdoms *profit to suffer them.*…

Interestingly, although he did not reference him directly, Prynne also rebutted Menasseh ben Israel's aforementioned argument for Jewish readmission, used *ad nauseam* since the 17th century: that it is the Christian duty to welcome the stranger. Prynne argued, citing many verses of Scripture, that this Christian hospitality extends only towards:

> exiles, travellers, and other private distressed strangers, coming in to lodge, or sojourn with us for a short season in our houses, or Country, and standing in need of our relief… but especially to such who are of the houshold of faith, not Jews or Infidels… Not to the reception of any whole foraign Nation or Colony into our Island to cohabit perpetually with us (the only point in question)…

Prynne also liberally referenced Scripture to show the 'illegallity, folly and sad consequences of our receiving Jews and other strangers in such a nature, of which our Ancestors had sufficient experience in the Jewes themselves'.[264]

It is admirable with what clarity Prynne predicted the evolution of Jewish behaviour in various countries and with what reasoning he spoke out against settlement in his own country. In his view, Jews are strangers, completely opposed to the people of the host nation, whose customs and laws they have filled with their Asian ideas and therefore completely distorted. What profound and prophetic words of truth!

According to Prynne's citing of the Declaration promulgated by Cromwell on November 24th, 1655, it had been stated that it was '*necessary to use all good means to secure the Peace of the Nation, and prevent further troubles within the same*'. Prynne therefore saw the readmission of the Jews as a violation of this declaration:

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264 Prynne, pp. 77-82. Translator's note: All quotations reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to pp. 96-101 of second edition.

> The bringing in of the Jews at this season, when the people are so generally divided, discontented, and declare (for ought I can learn) their highest, unanimous dislike, and detestation of it, is the most probable means *to disturb the peace of the Nation*, and to engender future new troubles, Tumults within it; the generality of the people in *England*, and in other Countries, having in former ages frequently risen up in armes against them; massacred, burnt and destroyed them, notwithstanding their Kings and Magistrates Proclamations and Edicts to the contrary. And the Jews themselves in all ages having *been principle firebrands of sedition both in their own Land, and all places where they have been dispersed.…* Therefore their re-admission into *England*, (especially in this unique season) must needs be diametrically contrary to the scope of this *Declaration*; and neither in policy nor prudence to be resolved on, but utterly rejected.[265]

He also pointed out that a recent law banned the former king's supporters from engaging in any kind of public activity. The government wanted to grant all of these rights to foreigners, Jews, precisely because they were Jews, but not to the other native freeborn Englishmen, 'only for their old *delinquency* in adhering to the late King and Prince (though according to their Oaths, duties and dictate of their consciences)'.[266]

A law had also been promulgated that authorised the government to expel former supporters of the king if they endangered the security of the state, and similarly allowed for the entry of Jews:

> The *Orders for securing the peace of the Nation*, which the *Declaration* relates to; *contrary to all the Statutes, Acts, Resolutions of our Parliaments and Law-books forecited*, upon another occasion authorize *the Major Generals and Commissioners named in them. To banish and send into Foraign parts and Plantations, all persons of the royal party formerly in arms, of no estate, and living loosly, and all persons whatsoever that shall appear by their words or actions to adhere to the party of the late King or his Son, & to be dangerous Enemies to the peace of the Commonwealth*, even without and before any Legal indictment, tryal, conviction of any particular crime, for which a Sentence of *Banishment is prescribed by our Laws:* or any Judgement or Act of Parliament inflicting this heavy Punishment upon them, far worse to many than death it self. Now I shall earnestly intreat in the name and fear of God, all those whom it most concernes, to consider in their own retired thoughts, how unjust, unrighteous, unreasonable, unchristian and more than brutish it will seem to all Free-born English men, and conscientious Christians, both at home and abroad, and what great scandals it may bring, both upon our Nation, Government, and Religion it self, in this manner (and on this old account alone) to banish these Christian English Freemen out of their Native Country, both from their Wives, Children, Kinred, and Gods own publike Ordinances; and at the self-same time to call in foraign, Infidel Jews, (greatest Enemies to Christ himself and Christians, and in that respect more dangerous to the peace and welfare of the Nation than those thus to be banished) to supply their places, even against an express old Judgement and Edict of the whole Kingdom in Parliament, for their

265 Prynne, pp. 84-5. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source [pp. 103-4 of 2nd edition].
266 Prynne, pp. 85-8. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source [p. 85; p. 104 2nd edition].

> perpetual exile. What a sad pernicious president [precedent] it may prove in future ages, upon every new revolution to banish all English freemen of a contrary party, and call in Forraigners in their rooms…[267]

At the end of his first volume, Prynne dealt with the arguments that the Jews' allies gave in favour of Jewish admission. They claimed that the Jews would probably be converted very easily if they settled in England. This was nonsense for various reasons, as Prynne carefully explained. There were also a great many heathen who needed salvation in the blood of Christ, and he argued that by this logic:

> …then we ought by this allegation in the first place to call the *Turks, Tartars, Persians, Chinoys, and all other unconverted Gentile Nations into England*, and first convert them to the Christian faith, before we bring in the Jews, whose conversion is to succeed theirs, and the Gentiles fullnesse, And then we shall have Religions enough in *England* to please all *Novelists*, and a thousand aliens to each English Native.

But even if one were to disagree, it would not be necessary to bring about the general conversion of the Jews by requiring them to settle in England; this could also be achieved 'with more ease, lesse danger and prejudice to our Nation and Religion' by sending English missionaries to the 'forraign parts where they now reside'. In addition, as Prynne argued, the Jew never converted to Christianity out of conviction, but usually only took this step out of coercion or convenience. Furthermore, as had been shown by recent events in Spain and Portugal, even a baptised Jew would still remain a Hebrew in all of his behaviour.[268]

Another reason put forward by the Jews and their allies for readmission was, in Prynne's words: '*That it will bring in much present and future gain and mony to the State, and advance trading*.' In Prynne's view, this was the real reason for the English support of the Jewish cause:

> That if this argument overpoysed not the scales, that of conscience, (the hopes of their conversion) would be lighter than the dust of the balance and sticke with no man, their mony being the only engin, which hath opened the gate and passage for them into any Christian Kingdoms at first, and made new entrance for them when they have been expelled.

Money, as Prynne affirmed, was what opened their first passage into England, and was what '…kept them so long in England heretofore, till their very banishment; A sign we love their money better than their souls or our own'. Under no circumstances should Jews be allowed to pay their way back into the country:

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267 Prynne, pp. 88-9. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to pages 107-8 of second edition.

268 Prynne, pp. 90-1. Translator's note: Quotations reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to pages 109-10 of second edition.

> For the Love of mony is the root of all evill, which whiles some coveted after, *they have been seduced (or erred) from the faith,* (as thousands of late years have been), *and pierced themselvs through with many sorrows*…
>
> And therefore let us give that resolute answer to the Jewish Agents, if they proffer to purchase an indenization amongst us by their gold, as St Peter once did to *Simon Magus* in another case: THY MONEY PERISH WITH THEE…

Prynne continued his economic argument for non-admission, and the following two paragraphs serve to introduce the many complex points he makes on various aspects of the English Interregnum economy and society at large:

> The introduction of the Jews into *England* and other Nations, never advanced the publike wealthe of the Natives and Republike, but much impaired it by their Usuries and Deceits, clipping and falsifying monies, ingrossing all sorts of commodities into their hands, usurping the Natives trades, and becomming such intolerrable grievances to them, that they were never quiet till they were banished, as their greatest Annoyance, and purchased their Exiles even with publick Subsidies granted to their Kings to be quit of them, as the premises [sources] abundantly evidence.
>
> The Trade of this Nation flourished more after their banishment hence, then ever it did before; and their introduction now, will but supplant, undoe our English Merchants and other Natives, to enrich them, and some few other Grandees, who shall share with them in their spoils and unrighteous gains… [269]

Prynne concluded his exposition, all of which is precisely referenced, with the following observation [quoted verbatim from original source]:

> I *John* 4.3. Every Spirit that* confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God, and THIS IS THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST, wherof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world.
>
> **The case of every Jewish Spirit.*

All in all, this is a book that deserves to be rescued from obscurity as one of the first scientifically based works in the fight against the Jewish spirit. It is nothing short of astonishing how Prynne's predictions on the progression of the Jewish system have come to pass. History has proven how the Jews and a small gentile elite have become vastly rich at the expense of the masses.

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269 Prynne, pp. 99-101. All quotations reproduced verbatim from original source. Corresponding to pp. 119-22 of second edition.

Continuation of the Whitehall Conference

Prynne's work was a resounding success when it was published. The people were shaken up by the facts he presented – especially since they were already strongly opposed to the Jews – as the last meeting of the conference on December 18th, 1655 demonstrates. However, that ‘the chamber was thronged by a somewhat unruly crowd of violent opponents of the Jews armed with Prynne’s newly published, virulently anti-Jewish tract’[270] could neither be established from official accounts, nor does it likely correspond to the facts.

There is much to suggest that the meeting was particularly bitter, but, on the other hand, Wolf’s reconstruction of events from the various accounts is particularly implausible.[271] He apparently wanted to show that, despite the fiercest opposition, Cromwell had the last word and not only intimidated his opponents into submission, but also logically refuted them. In any case, there is no detailed description of the proceedings and we can therefore only reproduce individual moments which have been reported.

Perhaps – we cannot be sure – Menasseh's friend, Mr. Henry Jessey, also spoke that day.[272] It must have been a great surprise to everyone that he took the floor. It must have come as an even greater surprise that even he did not advocate for an unconditional Jewish resettlement. Rather, he only wanted to allow the Jews to be able to settle in certain decayed ports and towns and be obligated to pay double Customs duties on imports and exports.[273]

Apparently, the city's merchants also had their say that day, arguing that immigration would only enrich the Jewish foreigners while impoverishing the native masses.[274] In particular, Sir Christopher Pack, one of the most influential merchants in the City and considered the most eminent citizen of his day, ranged himself with Menasseh’s opponents to deliver what was said to have been the most impressive speech in the entire course of the conference.[275]

Undoubtedly Cromwell also took the lead during the course of negotiations and initially emphasised that he would not make admission dependent on any conditions. The Reverend Joseph Spence reports the following anecdote which originates from the diplomat and historian Sir Paul Rycaut, who had been present at the conference as an audience member:

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270 Hyamson: *History*, p. 160. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Wolf [*Menasseh*, p. li] also paints this scene (likely copied by Hyamson), in less thrilling terms as ‘an excited crowd, armed with copies of Prynne’s newly published tract on the Jewish question, collected to hear the debate’ although he does, unlike Hyamson, add a conspiratorial note to the novelty of the last session being made public when he says ‘On this occasion the doors of the Council Chamber were, *for some sinister reason*, thrown open to the public’ (my italics). Hyamson alleges that the events above took place on the first meeting, when in fact most sources, including Wolf, point to the public being allowed entry only to what was to be the final meeting.

271 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. li ff.

272 Hyamson: *History*. p. 160.

273 W.: *Life and Death of Jessey*, pp. 67-68. Translator’s note: An interesting phenomena to note, and what has already been hinted at in this text [Peters, Jessey], is that the Englishmen who were most noted in the 1640s for their support of an unconditional Jewish readmission as part of a doctrine of religious tolerance, had all changed their positions significantly by the time of the Whitehall Conference in 1655. One Christian student of Judaism, Alexander Ross, had even come to decry Judaism and wrote the book ‘A View of the Jewish Religion’ (1656) to warn the English people against readmission. See Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, xliii.

274 Robert Burton, pp. 209-10; Harleian Miscellany, Vol. VII (1811 edition), pp. 620.

275 *Burton’s Parliamentary Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 308-9. Wolf, *Menasseh*, p. li.

> The Jews had better success with Oliver Cromwell, when they desired leave to have a synagogue in London. They offered him, when Protector, sixty thousand pounds for that privilege. Cromwell appointed them a day, for his giving them an answer. He then sent to some of the most powerful among the clergy, and some of the chief merchants in the city, to be present at their meeting. It was in the long gallery at Whitehall. Sir Paul Rycaut, who was then a young man, pressed in among the crowd, and said he never heard a man speak so well in his life, as Cromwell did on this occasion. When they were all met, he ordered the Jews to speak for themselves. After that he turned to the clergy, who inveighed much against the Jews, as a cruel and cursed people. Cromwell in his answer to the clergy called them 'Men of God', and desired to be informed by them whether it not their opinion, that the Jews were one day to be called into the church? He then desired to know, whether it was not every Christian man's duty to forward that good end all he could? Then he flourished a good deal on the religion prevailing in this nation, the only place in the world where religion was taught in its full purity: was it not then our duty, in particular, to encourage them to settle here, where alone they could be taught the truth; and not to exclude them from the sight, and leave them among idolaters? This silenced the clergy. He then turned to the merchants, who spoke much of their falseness and meanness, and that they would get their trade from them. ''Tis true,' says Cromwell, 'they are the meanest and most despised of all people.' He then fell into abusing the Jews most heartily, and after he had said every thing that was contemptible and low of them: 'Can you really be afraid,' said he, 'that this mean despised people, should be able to prevail in trade and credit over the merchants of England, the noblest and most esteemed merchants of the whole world!' Thus he went on, till he had silenced them too; and so was at liberty to grant what he desired to the Jews. —*L. (Who had this from Sir. P. Ricaut himself…)*[276]

Wolf rendered this part of the speech as follows:

> Then, turning to the merchants, he harped sarcastically on the accusations they had brought against the Jews. 'You say they are the meanest and most despised of all people. So be it. But in that case what becomes of your fears? Can you really be afraid that this contemptible and despised people should be able to prevail in trade and credit over the merchants of England, the noblest and most esteemed merchants of the whole world?' It was clear, he added sharply, that no help was to be expected from the Conference, and that he and the Council would have to take their own course.[277]

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276 Spence, pp. 78-9. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Note also the introduction into the story of the offer of money for a synagogue, a novel element which may indeed be correct, or may be the distortional effect of a misremembered anecdote, or legend repeated over time (Spence wrote it down c. 1730). The '*better success with Oliver Cromwell*' refers back to a previous anecdote in Spence's book, found also in Volume 3 of this study, in which it was stated that the Jewish agents on behalf of Jewish chiefs abroad had offered Lord Godolphin £500,000 (with the potential to raise it to £1,000,000) if the government would allow the Jews the town of Brentwood, along with full trading and residence rights in the town, for which they would also bring over their richest merchants, and would additionally bring 20 million pounds in cash for circulation. Lord Molesworth reported that Lord Godolphin refused, fearing, among other things, backlash from the clergy and the merchants.

277 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. liii. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. Note also the use of the word 'sharply', which implies a rebuke, absent from the other accounts.

Thus the story ends very similarly to the version found in Robert Burton's *Judaeorum Memorabilia*. Wolf cites the official report in *Harleian Miscellany*, *Judaeorum Memorabilia* and Spence's *Anecdotes* for his version.[278] The first two passages, however, are completely silent about this part of Cromwell's speech, so that Wolf could only have got his text from Spence. But there is a big difference between the source text and Wolf's rendition: while according to the former Cromwell himself actually described the Jews as a very evil and despicable people, according to Wolf's version he did not insult them on his own initiative, but simply took the merchant's view of the Jews for his argument.

Why did Wolf make this change, which Hyamson, presumably in good faith, then adopted for his own work?[279] Was it unpleasant to him that Cromwell, whom he described as the greatest friend of the Jews, had said such bitter words about the Hebrews?

According to Spence's account, Cromwell also silenced the merchants completely, 'and so was at liberty to grant what he desired to the Jews'.

According to the most comprehensive account, Henry Jessey's *A Narrative of the late Proceedings at White-hall, concerning the Jews* (1656), a 16-page quarto-sized chapbook which is also reproduced in the *Harleian Miscellany,* the final meeting ended in the following way:

> All having been heard, the Lord Protector on the 18 of December and before, professed, that he had no engagement to Jews, but only what the Scripture holds forth, and that He had hoped by these Preachers to have had some clearing of the case, as to conscience. But seeing these agreed not, but were of two or three opinions, it was left the more doubt full to him and the Councel. And he hoped to do nothing herein hastily or rashly: and had much need of all their prayers, that the Lord would direct them, so as may be to his glory, and to the good of the Nation.
>
> And thus was the dismission of that Assembly.

Burton clearly used the Jessey pamphlet as his primary source, as the excerpt below shows:

> Now the Protector having heard all their sentiments upon the affair, declared, 'That he had no engagement to the Jews but what the Scripture held forth, and that since there was a promise of their conversion, means must be used to that end, which was the preaching of the gospel, and that could not be had unless they were permitted to reside where the gospel was preached. That he had hoped, by these preachers, to have had some clearing of the case, as to matters of conscience, but seeing these agreed not, but were of different opinions, it was left more doubtful to him, and the council, than before; and he hoped he should do nothing herein hastily or rashly, and had much need of all their prayers, that the Lord would direct them so as might be to his glory, and the good of the nation.'[280]

278 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 621; Robert Burton, p. 210.
279 Hyamson: *History*, p. 161.
280 *Harleian Miscellany*, Vol. VII (1811 edition), p. 621; Robert Burton. p. 210. Translator's note: Both quotations reproduced verbatim from the original source, although in the first case I also took the spellings and other historical elements from the original pamphlet, available online at the University of Michigan Library digital collections.

This differs considerably from the version given by Spence and shows that the greatest caution should be exercised when assessing the reliability of Wolf's presentation of events. While Wolf broadly repeats the ending of the official version, his final addition of the sentence: ‘So saying, he vacated the chair in token that the proceedings were at an end’, which, when read along with his addition of the word ‘sharply’ to describe Cromwell’s tone, gives the reader the impression that he left the chamber abruptly in a fit of pique, which is not at all found in the other sources.

Today it is difficult to fathom what exactly happened after December 18th, 1655. What is certain is that ‘the Conference ended without further adjournment’.[281] Diplomatic correspondence reveals that that Cromwell later heard the opinions of his ministers. We are not told anything about the outcome of this new meeting, but it is likely that no result was achieved there either.[282] Wolf[283] and Hyamson[284] both state that a committee report was submitted to the Council of State according to which it would agree to Jewish readmission under certain conditions listed in the document, but it appears that the report was not formerly accepted by the Council. Wolf cites a report contained in surviving state papers to support this claim. It is true that this copy is undated and unendorsed, which means that there is no guarantee for the accuracy of the date of November 13th, 1655 as suggested by Mrs. Everett Green in the *Calendar of State Papers*.[285] On the other hand, while Wolf is forced to admit that there is not the slightest mention of it in the Order Book of the Council of State, elsewhere he gives the date of this document as November 13th, 1655.[286] If this date for the document is correct, then it cannot be the committee report submitted to the Council of State after the Whitehall Conference, as it would pre-date the first meeting (which took place on December 4th of that year).

Cromwell had recognised from the outcome of the conference that there was still great resistance to Jewish readmission. Public opinion, which even Cromwell could not completely ignore when making his decisions, was bitterly opposed to the Jews entering England. The people could foresee the long-term consequences of approving Cromwell’s request, even if Cromwell himself was incapable of doing so. As a consequence, there can be no doubt that the so-called Whitehall Conference was a complete failure for the Jews.

Nevertheless, in apparent obliviousness to the reality of what actually took place in December 1655, in 1906 the occasion of the Whitehall Conference was celebrated with a pompous banquet in London to mark its 250th anniversary. A large number of leading men attended this celebration, and the speeches delivered culminated in the highest praise of the Jews ever heard.[287] A member of Parliament did not shy away from making Brahms fully Jewish[288] and Goethe part Jewish,[289] for the glory of the Jewish nation. No one, especially an Englishman, should fail to read the speeches that

281 *Mercurius Politicus*, Issue 288, December 18th, 1655.
282 Letter sent by Salvetti dated December 31st 1655 in Roth: *New Light*, p. 130.
283 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. 56 ff.
284 Hyamson: *History*, p. 162.
285 Henriques: *Return*, p. 54. Translator’s note: For the *State Papers* entry in question, see the text corresponding to footnote 221. Henriques reproduces this report in full [*Return*, pp. 52-54], and argues convincingly that it appears less like a document proposing the conditional re-entry of Jews, and more of a ‘pros and cons’ list made during a debate to decide whether the Jews should be allowed entry at all.
286 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 11.
287 Wolf: *Whitehall Conference*, p. 276. ff. Translator’s note: That the details of what actually happened in 1655 were irrelevant to the 1906 gathering is indicated by the fact that not a thing is said about the Whitehall Conference itself in the article, except for the fact that the anniversary for the event fell on Dec 4th, 1905 [which implies that there had been only one Whitehall meeting].
288 Wolf: *Whitehall Conference*, p. 284.
289 Wolf: *Whitehall Conference*, p. 285.

were given at the event. Unfortunately it would take us far too long to discuss them in detail here, but we would like to include a small excerpt from the speech of the then Earl of Crewe. After explaining that he was related by marriage to the House of Rothschild and that he himself had Jewish blood in his veins through the marriage of one of his ancestors to a Jew, he continued:

> …Many of you are, no doubt, aware that books are published indicating the descent of various people in this country from the royal family. Honest citizens study these volumes, and find they are descended from a Plantagenet or even from a Tudor monarch, and their satisfaction at the discovery is only tempered by the fact that hundreds of thousands can boast the same distinction. But my suggestion is this: Some person of leisure with a taste for genealogy should attempt to trace the Jewish descent of what I may call the titled and untitled nobility in this country. Without going quite so far as Mr. Lowell – for it must be admitted that there are men of tolerable intellect and good character with no Jewish blood in their veins – yet that inquiry would come as a revelation to some people of the extent to which English families have been allied with those of the Jewish race. And who shall say – I certainly shall not – that these alliances have been anything but an intellectual gain, and, I have no doubt, of moral benefit, to the people of this country?[290]

Words from a British nobleman! No further comment is needed.

As has already been well demonstrated, the majority of the Jews who came from all over the world left London in bitter disappointment after the Whitehall Conference. However, Menasseh ben Israel held out – and probably some other Jews with him.

290 Wolf: *Whitehall Conference*, p. 293. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. '*Without going quite so far as Mr. Lowell*': In one of the preceding speeches at the banquet, James Bryce MP said that 'the late Mr. James Russell Lowell asserted that nearly all the eminent literary and artistic men of the last two centuries had been of Jewish stock' (*ibid*, pp. 284-5).

The Struggle Goes On

The legal path to entry, that is, the one approval by Parliament, had failed. The Jews therefore took the path that was not unfamiliar to them, namely, through the back door. In the scrap remains of a letter dated December 31st, 1655 that had been preserved among state papers, we find the following confirmation:

> The Jews, we hear, will be admitted by way of connivency, though the generality oppose.[291]

Even back then, the means used by the Jews were the same as they are today: they tried to get ahead through bribery. On the same day, Salvetti, the Tuscan envoy, wrote to his government that the Jews were doing their best to win over their opponents through bribery and thus gain their purpose '*a colpi d'oro*' [i.e. by force of gold].[292]

But the other means, so often used on such occasions, of convincing the public of the just Jewish cause through so-called 'enlightening' or 'progressive' propaganda, was also used. In particular, it was deemed essential to try to have counter-propaganda to Prynne's brilliant work. At the beginning of January 1656, a small pamphlet by John Dury [or Durie] appeared, who saw his life's goal as the unification of all Protestant states. For this purpose he travelled everywhere and was known throughout Europe, not only because of this but also because of his writings.[293] His pamphlet was addressed to Samuel Hartlib, a friend of John Milton's, who had made a name for himself in England as an educational reformer.[294] In this short tract he took the position that admitting Jews did not violate the laws of England, despite providing no evidence for this.[295] Nevertheless, he recommends that the state put the necessary restrictions in place to 'avoid the temporall inconveniencies which may arise from their [the Jews'] covetous practices and biting usury, and other subtilities in trade, by which we of the Nation may be prejudged in our Liberty, and brought in some respect or other under their power'.[296] However, if the state took measures against these issues from the outset, he had no concern about the settlement of Jews – on the contrary, he welcomed it, for in such an event there would be the prospect of their conversion to Christianity, which he saw as a Christian duty.[297] But Dury then added a postscript according to which he apparently wanted to apply so many restrictions that he came very close to the aforementioned conditions laid down by the clergy. In this postscript, he offered to send a copy of the Jewish statute for the German state of Hesse, where he was residing, a statute which was well known for its restrictiveness, but which he approved of: 'Our State doth wisely to goe warily, and by degrees, in the busines of receiving them.' He once more implored the need for care when receiving the Jews:

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291 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 82. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.
292 Roth: *New Light*, p. 130. Translator's note: Quoted element reproduced verbatim from original source.
293 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1888 edition), Vol. XVI, p. 261-263.
294 *Dictionary of National Biography* (1891 edition), Vol. XXV, p. 72-3.
295 Dury: *Case*, p. 2. Translator's note: Note that the *Harleian Miscellany* reproduction is completely reliable, but those wishing to see the original pamphlet can find it on Internet Archive, its authorship misattributed to Samuel Hartlib.
296 Dury: *Case*, p. 8. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. It really is quite astonishing to see how blithely some ancient commentators could countenance the irreparable destruction of the wellbeing, freedom and security of future generations.
297 Dury: *Case*, p. 5.

> Menasseh Ben Israels Demands are great, and the use which they make of great Priviledges, is not much to their commendation here, and elswhere. They have wayes beyond all other men, to undermine a State, and to insinuate into those that are in Offices, and prejudicate the Trade of others; and therefore if they be not wisely restrained they will in short time be oppressive, if they be such as are here in Germany…[298]

One sees that in this postscript John Dury has retracted much of what he said in the main text itself on behalf of the Jews.

Another pro-Jewish treatise appeared, this time by Thomas Collier, which was probably published at the instigation of Cromwell.[299] In the preface the author stated that Cromwell alone had the power to help the Jews, which was why he had dedicated his work to the Lord Protector.[300]

In his introduction Collier made clear that his treatise was intended as a refutation of the anti-Jewish publications.[301]

Nevertheless, Collier could not deny that the Jews had always been an insubordinate people. He also admitted that they practiced usury, but to him this was not a big deal, given that other individuals in the country were already working in the same business. Despite this disadvantage, they were needed in England to increase trade. From the outset, deterrent laws would have to be made against usury, defaming Christ's name and the risk of ritual infanticide [!].[302] The people were considerably upset at the Hebrews, which was a result of the spread of false teachings.[303] The Jews had been given their freedom in other Protestant countries, such as Holland, so why not England as well?[304] And when it came to trade, arguably the most important issue for the dedicatee, if not the writer himself: '…even if their trade means a loss for some rich merchants, it is generally to the overall benefit of the people: the more goods come into the country, the more plentiful and cheaper the supply.'[305]

Although the Jews had their faults, they were still the chosen of God, who would one day make them leaders of all nations and punish those who treated them badly.[306] It would therefore, Collier argued, be better to let them come into England.[307]

Apparently this book did not succeed to swaying popular opinion to the Jewish cause, especially since Prynne published the second part of his scientific work in February 1656. In his preface to the second book Prynne remarked that the extraordinary short deadline for his first book, which needed to be written and in print before the end of the Whitehall Conference in order to be of any use, necessarily meant that he had had to omit a lot of relevant historical research. This research was now being published as a second volume, which those who had bought the first volume could then append to the original text. This sequel deals mainly with the period of Jewish history before

298 Dury: *Case*, p. 9. Translator's note: Quotations reproduced verbatim from original source.
299 Graetz: *Geschichte der Juden*, Vol. X, p. 109.
300 Collier, Preface.
301 Collier, p. 3.
302 Collier, pp. 7-8. Translator's note: Sadly, I do not have access to the original source, so cannot verify the wording of this otherwise incredible statement, all the more so given that it appears in an apology for Jewish readmission.
303 Collier, p. 9.
304 Collier, p. 12.
305 Collier, p. 13.
306 Collier, pp. 16-7.
307 Collier, p. 21 ff.

the year 1230. Prynne emphasised that the Jews' ongoing state of banishment was effected by a public law of Parliament, and used the opportunity provided by a second book to refute the counter-arguments generated by the first.[308] He also called on the public to go and look at the antique documents he had cited, which were archived in the Tower of London and which proved the facts of his thesis, thus justifying his stance against the Jews in general.[309] This last comment is interesting for the fact that it coincides with our view that only scientifically based educational writings will be of any use in solving the Jewish Question.

Another book was written at the end of 1655, but was not published until the following year.[310] The author only uses the initials 'W. H.' to identify himself, although it is now known that this was William Hughes, a lawyer of Gray's Inn. Judging from the scientific basis of the book, it must have been a learned personality. Here, too, there are references to old documents and manuscripts. The second part deals mainly with the Menasseh's book *The Humble Addresses*, with Hughes accusing Menasseh of not having adhered strictly to the truth.[311] Menasseh is also accused of not answering the question of whether the Jews would really make up for the damage that they would inflict on the native merchants with the predicted increase in Customs and Excise revenue from their own trading activities [Hughes believed that they would not].[312] In contrast to Menasseh, Hughes did not consider it an advantage that the Jews did not have a homeland, because they – or their capital – could leave England again just as quickly as their persons and capital (as Menasseh himself admitted) were currently leaving Spain.[313] Nor was it to be forgotten that their loyalty to the traditional royal houses and state institutions was never very strong; on the contrary, they were inclined to revolt in every place that they settled.[314]

History also taught that:

> …the Jews at all times have so, for the most part, behaved themselves, as that they have ministered to the Christians occasion of dislike and prejudice; and that all the slaughters and massacres of them may be laid at their own doors. Here in *England*, they first begun to crucifie children and oppress the people, before they were injured, to speak on, or molested, they spoiled the coyn in *Henry* the Second his days, and yet had the priviledge of burying in all places of their abode granted. The first tumult we read of raised against them was at the Coronation of *Richard* the first, and that was occasioned by themselves, offering to come into the Kings house, notwithstanding a proclamation to the contrary. And the occasion of the tumult at *Lin* [King's Lynn] was, their endeavour to kill a Convert: their grievous extortion at *Stamford*, *York*, and other places, drew upon them the inconveniences that followed. After this the people inraged, prosecute them as National enemies, yet they leave not off their extortions, make it their annual practice to crucifie children, conspire against City and people, still clip and spoil the coyn, as very earnest to undo themselves.

308 Prynne, Vol. II, p. 135 ff.
309 Prynne, Vol. II, p. 144.
310 *Anglo-Judaeus*, pp. 51-2.
311 *Anglo-Judaeus*, 'The Epistle Dedicatory', p. 32.
312 *Anglo-Judaeus*, p 35.
313 *Anglo-Judaeus*, pp. 36-9.
314 *Anglo-Judaeus*, pp. 39-44. Translator's note: The author helpfully provides the reader with a history of Jewish revolts from antiquity onwards.

In addition, there was also the question of their national loyalty:

> *Their faithfulness* is sufficiently known, say what they will (however always to the true interest of this Nation) and if they should for better terms, play false with the State, hold intelligence with the enemies thereof, counterfeit the Coyn, clip the Money, set the Cities on fire, would not a safe prevention have proved better, than a too late remedy?[315]

After these statements one would expect that the author would come to an outright rejection of the Jews. Not quite. Perhaps for the same reason that the book is anonymous, the author ends the book with clever diplomacy, saying that he desires the Jews 'no evil will' and hopes that they continue to flourish in the foreign lands in which they currently reside, but given their memorial they have left behind in England (as thoroughly documented in his book), the nation of Judah would perhaps be better remaining abroad, for the good of both nations.[316]

What was the situation in general, and how did Cromwell in particular behave in the months following the Whitehall Conference? Our only authoritative information about this comes from the reports of the aforementioned Tuscan envoy Salvetti to his government. On January 7th he wrote that the Jews were still hoping for a favourable decision from Cromwell. In a letter dated January 28th he wrote that Cromwell's final decision was still not known. Meanwhile, Jews held their religious services in their homes. This latter remark has, moreover, led some historians to the wrong conclusion that the Jews were already allowed to freely practice their religion at this time. Salvetti then mentioned in his messages of February 4th and 11th that talk about the Jewish Question had died down and that for the time being the Jews were content to be able to go about their prayers secretly. Apparently Cromwell was happy to let them continue as long as it didn't cause a public scandal. On February 25th we learn from Salvetti that talk about the Jews was virtually at an end. That was his last word on the matter.[317]

What went on behind the scenes after the collapse of the Whitehall Conference continues to remain a mystery. It will probably never be determined why Cromwell refrained from making a decision that was favourable to the Jews. Perhaps it was the opposition from the clergy and the City of London merchants, or even the resentment of the people, that stayed the hand of the all-powerful Lord Protector. Or perhaps it had proven impossible to reach a decision on the price that Jews should pay for their privileges. As has already been mentioned, on January 24th, 1656, Colonel Whitley commented in a letter to Sir Edward Nicholas that Cromwell thought it an 'ungodly thing' to admit the Jews, but that if he refused them, it would only be because 'they refuse to purchase it at the summe desired'.[318]

This anecdote about Cromwell indicates that he had little to no interest in the Jews as people, his desire to 'help' them instead motivated by how he could exploit them for political-economic gain. However, the Jewish Question was soon to return to the spotlight of domestic political events in England when, as early as March 1656, a flare-up of tensions was sparked by the so-called

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315 *Anglo-Judaeus*, pp. 45-6, 48. Translator's note: Quotations reproduced verbatim from original source. On the question of national loyalty, the author also brings up the 'Treason of *Lopez*' (p. 46).

316 *Anglo-Judaeus*, p. 52. Translator's note: Quoted element from original source.

317 Roth: *New Light*, pp. 131-2.

318 Nicholas Papers, Vol. III, p. 255. Translator's note: Quoted elements reproduced verbatim from original source. The full quotation from this letter can be found earlier in this volume (see text corresponding to footnote 232).

‘Robles case’. In the spring of 1656 war broke out between England and Spain. The Privy Council had announced its decision to confiscate the private property of all Spaniards in England for the benefit of the government.[319]

A certain Francis Knevett, an Englishman with a knowledge of Spanish, had been close to the Marrano community for a long time. By an unexplained coincidence, but likely through civil service connections, Knevett was informed of the Privy Council’s decision a few days before the official announcement. He met with John Baptista Dunnington, factor to the rich Marrano *don* Antonio Rodrigues de Robles and revealed the secret to him, and in his shock at the news Dunnington blurted out that Robles and other Marranos were Spaniards [i.e. not Portuguese nationals, as had been generally presumed]. Dunnington also explained that the two ships which had just arrived in London with a rich cargo, although registered in his name, actually belonged to Robles. Of course, this could easily come out, especially if the papers were confiscated. The damage would be very great, as Robles not only had considerable stocks of goods in storage, but also had forty thousand gold ducats kept in strongboxes in his house. Dunnington admitted that similar agreements existed with other Marranos, which meant that such a decree being enforced would necessarily ruin not only the Marrano community, but also himself. In his panic-stricken state, Dunnington revealed all of his secrets. The conversation was overheard by a third person, Philip del Hoyo, who was simultaneously taking notes of Dunnington's statements. Immediately after the announcement of the aforementioned decision, all of Robles' assets, including the two cargo-laden ships, the ‘Two Brothers’ and the ‘Tobias’, were confiscated by the government.[320]

Robles sent a petition to Cromwell asking for his assets to be released. He justified it by saying that he was not a Spaniard, but ‘a Portuguez borne and of the Hebrew nation’. He pointed out that he had ‘resided heere many yeares and payd many thousand pounds for Customes’ to the English government through his trading. He relied on the testimony of one of his young employees to claim that he had Portuguese nationality.

The Robles trial opened. During the course of witness questioning, Robles’ employee declared that he could not lie – he knew for a fact that Robles was Spanish. In response to Robles’ objection that he had married a woman with Portuguese nationality, the employee replied that he would not thereby acquire Portuguese nationality. Thus Robles was unable to provide evidence for his claim and at the same time was unable to refute either Knevett's testimony or the statement of Philip del Hoyo, the man who had overheard Dunnington's confession.[321]

The remaining Jews began to recognise the danger Robles was in. If it were found that he had Spanish nationality and the confiscation of his assets was therefore legal, they would have to fear the same fate. Apparently they were ready to support their fellow Jew by any means necessary. They therefore came forward as witnesses and were admitted to testify. Probably – to the chagrin of Robles and his friends – only a few said that he was Portuguese. Dunnington was also questioned and had to admit that he had previously heard everyone say that Robles was Spanish. As a result, Dunnington had never considered him to be Portuguese, although he had recently heard opposing views. It was also not true that Robles kept a lot of money in the house, according to the report of Dunnington’s witness testimony:

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319 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. lx ff.

320 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 60-3; Henriques: Return, p. 54-55; *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 227. Dunnington’s panicked response may be due to the fact that not only would the seizure of the Marranos’ goods see him irreparably ruined, but he was only 21 or 22 years old at the time of the event [based on *Crypto-Jews*, p. 81].

321 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 62-3. Quotations reproduced verbatim from Wolf’s appendix of the trial documents [p.77].

> … to the second question whether he conveyed mony out of his house upon Notice given him of the Seasur [seizure] that would be upon Spanyards I answer that I never did ether see him nor hear say that he ever did convey any mony out of his house. Besides I know sertainly that he never kept any more money in his house thin what he spent in the house for he not having a Cashkeeper did always keepe his moneys att a goldsmithes whose name is Mr. Backwell who reseived it and payd it out according to his order.

From this last part of this statement it can be deduced that the 40,000 gold ducats initially mentioned by Dunnington were not found during the confiscation, so he must have retracted his earlier confession to Knevett. Robles was also questioned himself and of course claimed that he was not Spanish. When confronted, however, he had to admit that he had lived for a long time in Spain and in the Canary Islands, which are known to be Spanish colonial possessions. Furthermore, he could not deny that he had been in the service of the Spanish government for several years. Finally, witnesses said that he had attended masses in the Spanish embassy, since he had previously claimed to be a Catholic.[322]

An impartial judge should have found, after the evidence, that Robles had Spanish nationality and that the seizure of the assets was legitimate. Although some Jews had stated the opposite, when weighing the value of their statements, their own interest could not be ignored, which cast doubt on the truth of their statements. But apart from that fact, Robles had generally been considered a Spanish national before the trial, which Dunnington confirmed in his initial agitation. Furthermore, if there were no concerns about Robles' nationality, there would have been no need to register the ships that had just arrived in Dunnington's name. Then there was the fact that Robles himself had to admit that he had lived on Spanish territory for many years and that he had even been in the service of the Spanish government. Finally, there were positive statements from some witnesses that he was a Spanish citizen, so that there could not be the slightest doubt that Robles belonged to the Spanish polity, which Wolf apparently did not dispute.[323]

With all of these facts available, a corresponding verdict would probably have been expected. However, the Admiralty Commissioners, who were entrusted with this task, announced that 'they cannot ascertain whether Robles was a Spaniard or Portuguese'.[324] The Privy Council therefore had

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322 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 60-6; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, pp. lx-lxv; *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, pp. 227, 247, 274, 294, 316; Henriques: *Return*, pp. 54-59. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from *Crypto-Jews*, p. 82. Wolf (ibid, p. 63), explains this evidence for Robles' Spanish nationality in the following way: 'Seeing that, according to his own account, he had flown from Portugal to Spain, it is probable that he was one of the New Christians who so strangely conspired in 1641 to re-establish the Spanish domination in Portugal, and hence his claim to Portuguese nationality would scarcely bear a close scrutiny. Indeed, his uncle, Duarte Henriques Alvares, when asked how it was that his nephew could venture on Spanish territory, answered significantly that "the Portugalls who took part with the King of Spain were free to live in his territories". One at least of the London Marranos [Simon de Souza] seems to have figured in the conspiracy of 1641.' While this provides a theoretical underpinning to Robles' Portuguese claim, it does inadvertently lend itself to the unfortunate *tropes* that Jews have no natural loyalty to their host nation and feature disproportionately in national ferments and revolutions.

323 Wolf: *Status*, p. 178. Translator's note: Note that the statement Aldag is refers to ('as Jews, the Marranos were none the less Spaniards') can only be seen as incorrect, given that it implies that all Marranos whose Spanish ancestors fled to Portugal after 1492, over 150 years before the events in England, would still be considered Spanish nationals. Given that Wolf's wider point was about Catholicism rather than Spanish nationality, and he knows that the term *Marranos* refers both to Spanish and Portuguese crypto-Jews (*ibid*), a more accurate term for him to use would have been 'Iberians' rather than 'Spaniards'. For Wolf's view on Robles' himself, see footnote above.

324 *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 325. Translator's note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. For a man whose thesis is that the Jews are a separate race, and therefore cannot be a part of their host

to decide whether or not the seized assets were to remain in state custody. Its decision of May 16th, 1646 was to lift the confiscation order. No reason was given for this.[325] There should be no doubt, the Jewish writer Graetz asserts, that Cromwell brought about the decision.[326]

We ask ourselves whether once again, as with his general treatment of the Jewish Question, Cromwell's attitude was contingent on the Jews' supply of money. If we answer this in the affirmative, then in this case the sum must have been large enough to prompt him to make the decision that favoured the Jews. Whatever the case, the reason for the outcome has certainly proved resistant to the light of day. Otherwise it would have been stated, especially since the entire factual and legal situation pointed to the opposite verdict being the correct one.

We shall now turn to the part that Menasseh ben Israel played in this affair and the activities he was undertaking in the interim.

March 23rd, 1656 must have been a lucky day for him after all his many failures, because we find an entry in the public records according to which he received from Cromwell ‘a pension of 100*l* per annum, payable quarterly, and comenceing from the 20th day of February, 1656[-7]’.[327]

We can deduce from this that Cromwell was not ungenerous. Yet it is, in our opinion, somewhat strange that a head of state would grant a foreigner a pension in such a situation. This is all the more surprising given that Menasseh ben Israel did not even achieve success in his mission, nor was his activism approved of by the English people, the people whose money it was.

During the course of the Robles case hearing, Menasseh also took an active role. In ‘The Humble Petition of The Hebrews at Present Reziding in this citty of London whose names ar vnderwritten’, addressed to Cromwell and dated March 24th, 1656, Menasseh’s was the first of the seven Marrano names listed as signatories.[328] In contrast to the petitions of previous years, he had scaled back his aspirations considerably. He asked only for written permission for the Jews to gather in their private houses for devotion and to have their own burial place outside of the city.[329]

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nation, Aldag, in my opinion, is being somewhat disingenuous here, for the historical record shows that this incident forced the Marranos of London to ‘come out’ publicly as ‘of the Jewish nation and of the tribe of Judah’ as a defence strategy for Robles (*Crypto-Jews*, p. 65). This fact naturally made it difficult for the Privy Council to determine Robles’ nationality as Spanish or Portuguese, given that both Iberian nations had violently repudiated the Jews *qua* Jews, which included Jews living in crypsis, leaving the individuals affected with a liminal and often transnational official identity (as Robles) due to the need to escape ongoing persecution. Robles’ obviously Castilian name was not the Portuguese one (Fererino) he had been reputedly given when reputedly born in Fundão, Portugal. Nor could the Council even be assured of Robles’ Jewishness, given that he was uncircumcised. Indeed, the historical significance of this case is less the ‘unjust’ verdict meted out by Cromwell, and more the fact that, for the first time since 1290, Jews had openly admitted to having formed a Jewish community on English soil.

325 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, pp. 66, 86; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. lxvi.

326 Graetz, Vol. V, p. 117. Translator’s note: It should be noted that Graetz is an unreliable source for this case, given that he gets proven facts wrong in his account (e.g. Robles was arraigned ‘on the charge of being a Portuguese Papist’, and his property seized ‘because England was then at war with Portugal and did not tolerate Papists in general’). Therefore, Graetz’s assertion, that the Privy Council set aside the confiscation ‘at Cromwell’s suggestion assuredly’ because ‘the accused was not a Catholic but a Jew’, should be treated with caution. However, it is fitting to mention here that ‘the great Jew’ Carvajal, protected from the seizure order by his denization seven months earlier, was doubly protected from his asset seizure by a special order of the Privy Council (*Crypto-Jews*, p. 63).

327 *Fifth Report of the Deputy Keeper*, Appendix II, p. 263. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. According to letters written by Menasseh to Oliver Cromwell, and a letter written by John Sadler on behalf of Menasseh’s widow to Richard Cromwell [Wolf: *Menasseh*, lxxxvi ff.], as well as in Wolf’s opinion, it would appear that this pension was never paid, although Henriques [*Return*, p. 64] disagrees. In addition, John Sadler’s letter indicates that Menasseh’s mission to England had been the result of encouraging letters from Oliver Cromwell (and other notable Englishmen) sent out to various synagogues. Henriques [*Return*, p. 60] indicates that Cromwell gave Menasseh a pension to allay the embarrassment of the rabbi’s penurious situation in England.

328 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 76. Translator’s note: Quotation reproduced verbatim from original source.

329 Wolf: *Crypto-Jews*, p. 76. *Domestic State Papers*, Vol. 1655/56, p. 237.

Cromwell passed the request on to the Privy Council for further action, but it did not even give a response, let alone comply with the Jews' wishes.[330]

From the petition's wording it can be deduced that Cromwell had, on his own initiative, verbally granted the Jews the right to privately practice their religion, because the petition begins with the Jews thanking him for this permission, but asking for explicit written confirmation of the same. This apparently never happened. Apart from the issue of whether Cromwell's oral promise was legally valid under the English constitution, it is doubtful whether, even if this were the case, the oral promise would not be viewed as revoked by the refusal to confirm it in writing.

To support his petition and in a bid to change popular opinion on the Jews, Menasseh published another work on April 10th, 1656, titled *Vindiciae Judaeorum*.[331] The short book takes an epistolary form and is addressed to 'a Noble and Learned Gentleman' whose name Menasseh does not mention. The preface reveals that this individual had previously written to Menasseh and asked him to write this *vindication*. It is probably not wrong to assume that Prynne's educational tract must have made a deep impression on the English people, which was why the Jews and their supporters felt compelled to formulate a public response to *the Reproaches Cast on the Nation of the Jewes*.

In the first section of his book, Menasseh wrote with passion about the allegation that Jews killed Christian children on their holy days: 'I cannot but weep bitterly, and with much anguish of foul lament that strange and horrid accusation of some Christians against the dispersed and afflicted Jewes that dwell among them…' In fact, according to Menasseh, Jews were not only forbidden from killing by religious law, but they abhorred such acts, given that: 'The children of Israel are naturally mercifull, and full of compassion.' The incidents stated in the past by various writers and sources were either fabricated or false accusations made by Christians in order to shift their murders onto the poor Jews.[332]

The next three sections were devoted to explanations of synagogue ceremonies and the Jewish religion in general.[333] It was also not true, as Menasseh made clear in the fifth section, that the Jews tried to convert Christians to their religion.[334] Menasseh also saw no disadvantage in the fact that Jewish merchants had established themselves in England. If anything, the state would have an increased revenue from Customs and Excise duties and the prices of goods would naturally fall, benefitting more people. The Jews would also bring to England all of kinds of life-enhancing, hitherto unknown commodities and knowledge from far-flung places, thank to their global connections. These same global connections would ensure that the nation which treated Jews well would be extolled all over the world.[335]

In no way were there more fraudsters among the Jews than among other nations. Rather, the Old Testament and the Talmud prohibited Jews from cheating, stealing or robbery, whether from

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330 Henriques: *Return*, pp. 44, 61.

331 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, pp. lxiii-lxiv. Translator's note: The date is also given at the end of the main text (p. 39) of the tract itself (p. 145 if being consulted in Wolf). The full title of the tract is: *Vindiciae Judaeorum, or a Letter In Answer to certain Questions propounded by a Noble and Learned Gentleman, touching the reproaches cast on the Nation of the Jewes; wherein all objections are candidly, and yet fully cleared.*

332 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, pp. 2-16. Translator's note: Quotations reproduced verbatim from original source (pp. 2, 5).

333 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, pp. 16-31.

334 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, pp. 31-2.

335 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, p. 33-4. Translator's note: Examples of the 'things so necessary for the *life of man*' that the Jews would import into England are 'wine, oyl, almonds, raisins, and all the drougs of India'

other Jews or from Gentiles. Prynne's statements about the punishment of the Jews under Edward I were made purely out of hatred and were completely unfounded.[336]

Menasseh concluded his remarks by saying that he still had hope for the general scattering of the Jews – 'the holy people' – from one end of the earth to the other, which would necessarily include their admission to England, with all of the expected favourable consequences that this would bring. He also described what had inspired him to go on his mission to England:

> …the communication and correspondence I have held, for some years since, with some eminent persons of *England,* was the first originall of my undertaking this design. For I alwayes found by them, a great probability of obtaining what I now request; whilst they affirmed, that at this time the minds of men stood very well affected towards us; and that our entrance into this Island, would be very acceptable, and well-pleasing unto them. And from this beginning sprang up in me a semblable affection, and desire of obtaining this purpose.[337]

Even if Graetz thinks that the book produced 'the desired favourable effect' in England[338] – which we believe would be the case with the Jews and their allies – Menasseh was still unable to bring about a change in public opinion in favour of the Jews. As a result, Cromwell did not dare do anything for him openly. Menasseh was devastated by the failure of his mission, but held out in London until 1657. It was only when the son who accompanied him died in September that same year that Menasseh's spirit broke and he returned to Holland, taking his son's body with him, where he followed him to the grave a few months later at the age of 53.[339]

Much has been written about the fact that the Jews were granted a burial place in February 1657, probably through Cromwell's personal intervention. Here too, it is primarily Wolf who makes this claim, which is based on two documents from the years 1656/7 and 1670.[340] The former has been lost, and its existence is only known because the document from 1670 refers to it. The 1670 document states that the lease for a plot of land in Mile End (Stepney) had been signed by 'Anthony Fernandez Carvayall' and Simon de Caceres in February 1656/7. Henriques rightly argues that it was probably just a matter of leasing a private garden (where the Jews may have secretly buried their dead), as there is nothing documented to support Wolf's theory.[341] Indeed, the fact that the rabbi Menasseh transferred his son's body to Holland in September 1657 supports Henriques' carefully argued thesis that it must still have been illegal to burial a body with non-Christian religious ceremonies, and that Wolf's 'Jewish cemetery' was unknown to authorities.[342] Since this issue is of minor importance to us, we can leave it at the above statements, because even if the Jews had been

336 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, pp. 34-7.

337 Menasseh ben Israel: *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, p. 37 ff. Translator's note: Quoted element and quotation reproduced verbatim from original source. While he diplomatically does not name names, he implies that he knew Cromwell would be pleased at his arrival: 'And finding that my coming over would not be altogether unwelcome to him…'

338 Graetz: *Geschichte,* Vol. X, p. 112. Translator's note: Quoted from original source.

339 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. lxviii ff. Hyamson: *History*, p. 166. Translator's note: It is worth consulting the letters referenced in footnote 327 to see the tragedy of Menasseh's last few years in England, dealing with the stresses of mounting debt and ill health, begging for pension money that had been agreed but which never came.

340 Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 12 [*Jewish Chronicle*, 28/12/1887, p. 8]; Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. lxvii; Hyamson: *History*, p. 166; Adler: *Homage*, p. 38. Translator's note: Israel Davis also gives an abstract of the lease in the *Jewish Chronicle* of 26/11/1880.

341 Henriques: *Return*, p. 62.

342 Henriques: *Return*, p. 65-6. Translator's note: Henriques is by far the most informed source on this matter.

granted a burial place, this would not change their overall legal situation. Rather, it would only support our assertion that Cromwell generally tolerated the Jews.

Another theory advanced by Wolf is that Cromwell promised general protection to the Jews in 1658, which can be deduced from his granting of John Sadler's request to allow the Jews to build a synagogue.[343] This theory is based on a comment found in the biography written by Sadler's grandson Thomas Sadler in 1738. Henriques has also commented on this and demonstrated, by an analysis of the original manuscripts on which the 1738 comment was based, that it cannot be correct.[344] A detailed analysis of the passages cited by Wolf also do not stand up to careful scrutiny.[345] But this controversial issue is not of particular importance either. Even if this assurance were given by Cromwell, it should not be seen as a legally binding declaration for the future, but only as a further expression of his personal policy of toleration. We shall return to this topic shortly.

We have seen above how Cromwell favoured the Jews as much as possible, but how even he could only grant privileges to the extent that Parliament and the Privy Council would approve them. When Menasseh was called to England in 1655, Cromwell was certainly willing to provide the Jews with the permission necessary to legalise their residence, but even the all-powerful Lord Protector had to bow to the will of the people. After the Whitehall Conference he realised that his plans could not be achieved. He was only able to assert his influence, and only to the extent that the Jews he wanted for special purposes were tolerated in the country. Undoubtedly, under the laws of England at the time, the Jews were not allowed to worship publicly: they were therefore tolerated in England without having any rights. They always had to be prepared to be expelled from the country if the political situation took a turn for the worse, particularly if Cromwell ceased to have influence.

It is undisputed among historians that from the middle of the 17th century onwards, England decidedly steered its social structure and mental attitude towards commercialism.[346] In 1915, the well-known writer A. M. Ludovici had the following to say about the fruits of this revolution:

> The revolting cruelties of our early factory and mining life, the appalling brutality of our treatment of children in industry, the callous barbarity of the apprentice traffic (once so scandalous in England), the hideous ill-treatment of the little chimney-sweeps, and the hard unconcern with which even the modern world allows thousands and thousands of the proletariat to be dehumanised and sickened by besotting and hopeless labours – all these things, with which no monarch, however benign, however patriarchal, can now interfere, I regard as merely part and parcel with the original brutality of the true ancestors of the modern world, the Puritan and Free Parliamentary party, whose power, whose principles and whose life-despising morality have been paramount in England ever since the last upholder of good taste and popular liberty was overthrown and murdered by them in the fatal fifth decade of the seventeenth century.
>
> And when I look around me to-day, and perceive the harsh, ugly, unhealthy, vulgar, nervous and spiritless life of modern times; when I see the seething discontent in all grades of society, and especially in the women of north-western Europe, it seems to me by no means extravagant or even fantastic to suppose that at this present moment we are

343 Wolf: *Menasseh ben Israel*, p. lvii; Wolf: *Status*, p. 180; Wolf: *Re-Settlement*, p. 12; Hyamson: *History*, p. 163 ff.
344 Henriques: *Return*, pp. 59-60. Translator's note: Again, Henriques is the better authority in this matter.
345 Henriques: *Return*, pp. 59-61.
346 To name just one: Clark: *Later Stuarts*, 1660-1714, p. 35.

> witnessing the final unfolding of the bloom, the finest flower and the most perfect product of that religion of gain and greed, of trade and so-called liberty, of *uncontrolled* capitalism and unscrupulous exploitation; of the contempt of beauty, health, vigour, sexuality and high spirits, whereof the hygiene, the diet, the moral principles and the whole outlook on the world are to be sought and found in the general attitude of Prynne, Vane, Cromwell, Essex, Pym, Fairfax, Harrison, Hewson, Waller and the rest of odd names and natures which constituted seventeenth-century Puritanism.[347]

He convincingly argues that the struggle between King Charles I and the Republicans under Cromwell was not so much about differences in religion as about differences in economic theory. Charles I opposed with all his might the emerging financial power in the country, represented by the Puritans, who wanted to ruthlessly exploit the population for enormous profits. Indeed, he even sealed his commitment to the welfare of his subjects with his own death.[348]

There can also be no question that the entire transformation in the views and mindset of the English people was caused to a large extent by Puritanism.

Another factor, for those able to perceive it, is also undisputed: the influence of the Jews in England. The most striking feature of the difference between the history of Jews on the European mainland and their history in England is that in the latter case the Jews never lived in ghettos when they resettled. Rather, they lived unhindered among the population and used their influence in the ways that are generally known. The Jews in England around the middle of the 17th century had already progressed to the point that their continental brethren only managed to reach at the beginning or even in the middle of the 19th century: an incredibly important factor that is either ignored or deliberately neglected by historians who are not used to thinking and researching with our historical lens.

Without going into detail as to why the Jews in England played a significant part in this transformation of English life and character, the fact itself is at least sometimes mentioned by some historians. Sir George Clark points out that the Jews played a role in the aforesaid 17th-century cultural shift in that they had considerable influence in trade, banking and insurance.[349] The extent to which the Jews were already influential in the commercial life of England in the first half of the 18th century is shown in a pamphlet from 1753.[350]

The change in England in the 17th century can therefore mainly be traced back to Puritanism. Both Judaism and Puritanism have a lot in common and therefore complement each other. In his book, Ludovici explained how Puritanism led to the rise of trade, but at the same time led to the ruthless exploitation of the people, as is always the case with the system used by the Jews.

There are significant differences of opinion on how things have developed from the 17th century to the present day. Most historians, business leaders and politicians in England see this development as a blessing. They argue that the English Empire [latterly known as the British Empire], the largest empire of all time, was built through this capitalist system. Even if we agreed

347 Ludovici: *Defense of Aristocracy*, pp. 235-6. Translator's note: Other recommended books on this topic are William Cobbett's *A History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland* and R. H. Tawney's *Religion & The Rise of Capitalism.* Both authors argue convincingly that this problem of self-serving English religious doctrine predates Puritanism [see Translator's Bibliography].

348 Ludovici: *Defense of Aristocracy*, p. 31 ff.

349 Clark, p. 35.

350 'Philo-Patriae': *Further Considerations on the Bill*, p. 31 ff.

with their point of view, this vision of history seems to focus too much on the last 200 years – a short period of time in the life of a people! Rather, the question should be: How will this system affect the nature and culture of the English people in the future? But such ponderings would take us into the realm of theoretical ideas, which we would like to stay away from as far as possible – our approach is one of discovering, analysing and synthesising provable facts. We would rather pose the question in the following way: Has this system been a blessing for England to date, or has it already produced disadvantages that may one day in the future outweigh its advantages? Because while the question is about England's future, we can only answer it correctly if we deal with the facts of the present.

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